

Investi GATORS



John Patrick Green

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written and illustrated by
John Patrick Green

with color by Aaron Polk



First Second
New York

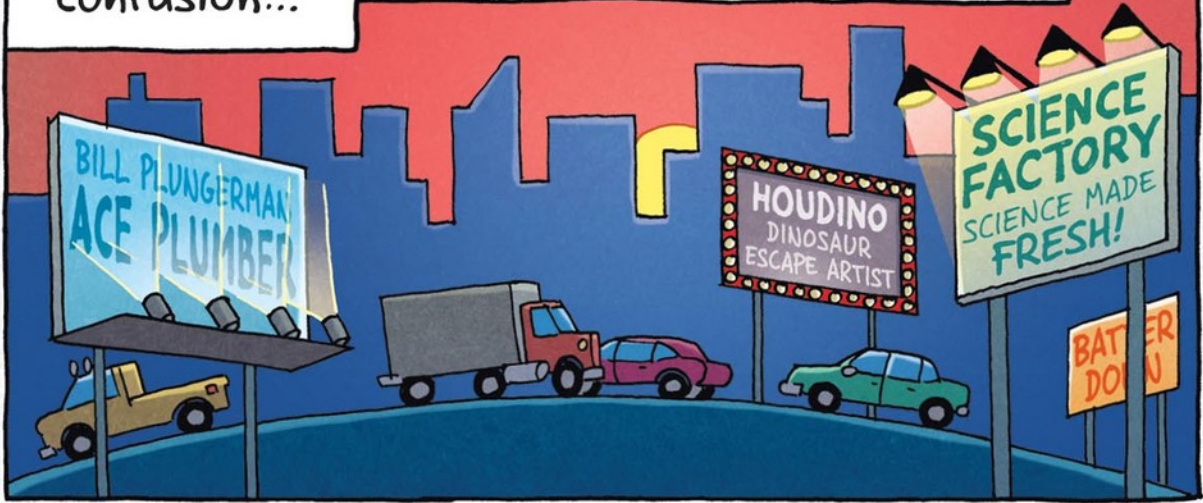
:01

First Second



Chapter 1

"In a world plagued by crime, corruption, and confusion..."



"One organization works in the shadows to right these wrongs..."



"Sending its **TOP AGENTS** to solve any mysterious mystery..."

These are our stories!



INVESTIGATORS

ARE
ON THE
CASE!



Mango! Get offa
my case!



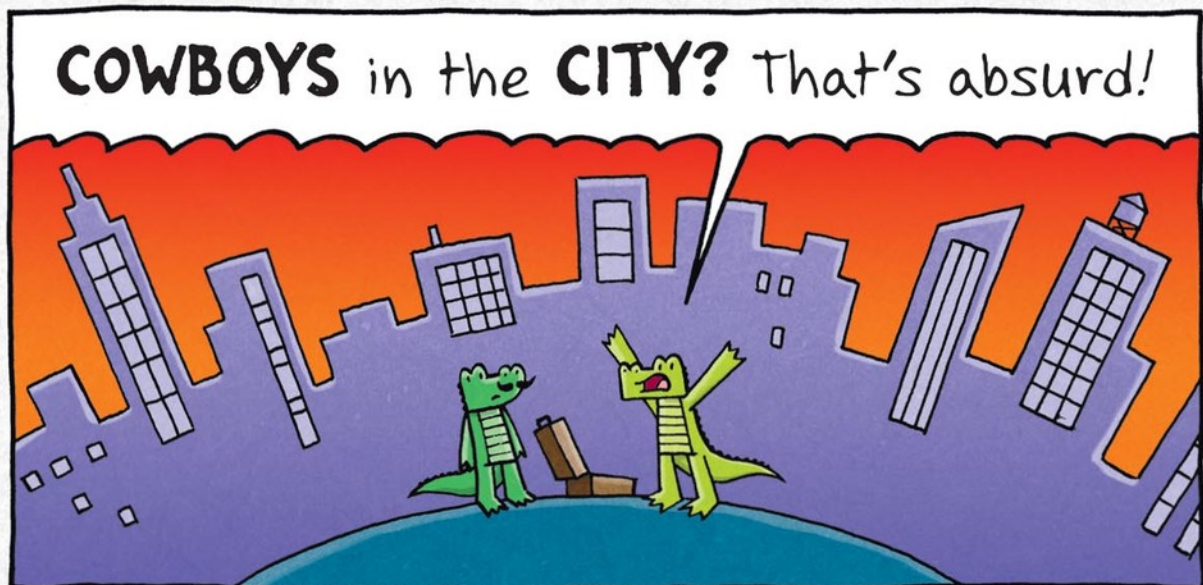
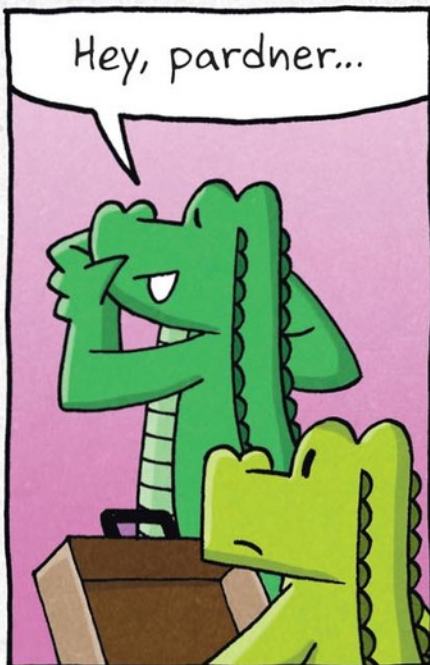
Oh. Sorry,
Brash.

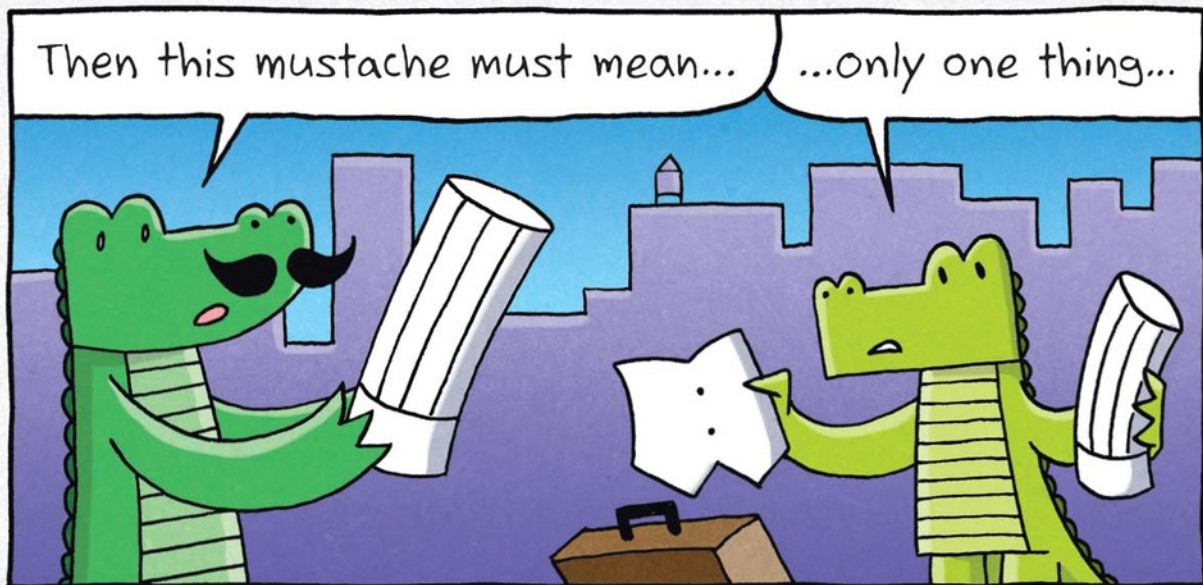


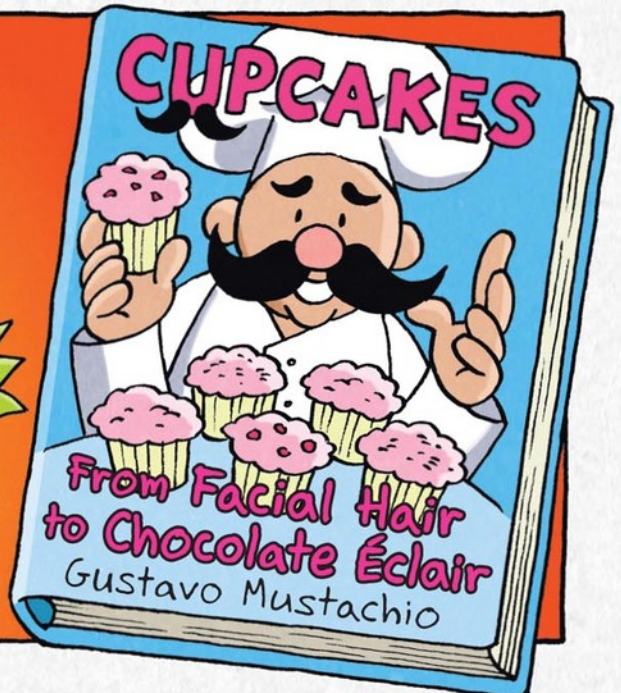
Our new V.E.S.T.*s are in this S.U.I.T.**case, along
with our next undercover assignment!

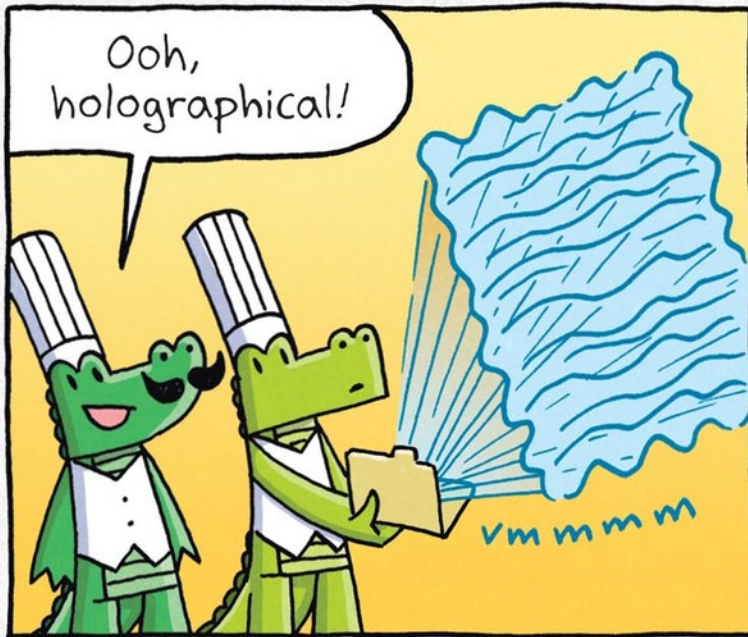


*Very Exciting Spy Technology **Special Undercover Investigation Teams









INVESTIGATORS! Your assignment is to go undercover at **Batter Down**, the bakery owned by this man: world-famous cupcake chef **Gustavo Mustachio**.



AH-HA! I was right!



You might also recognize him from, like, every pizza box ever.



AH-HA! I was **ALSO** right!



QUIET, you two! Chef Gustavo has gone **MISSING!**



Mustachio hasn't been seen in **TWO WEEKS!** We suspect foul play. Batter Down was about to unveil his latest culinary masterpiece.



Someone must be after his secret recipes!



Or **maybe** some nefarious villain needs an expert baker and/or mustache model.



Hey, anything's possible.



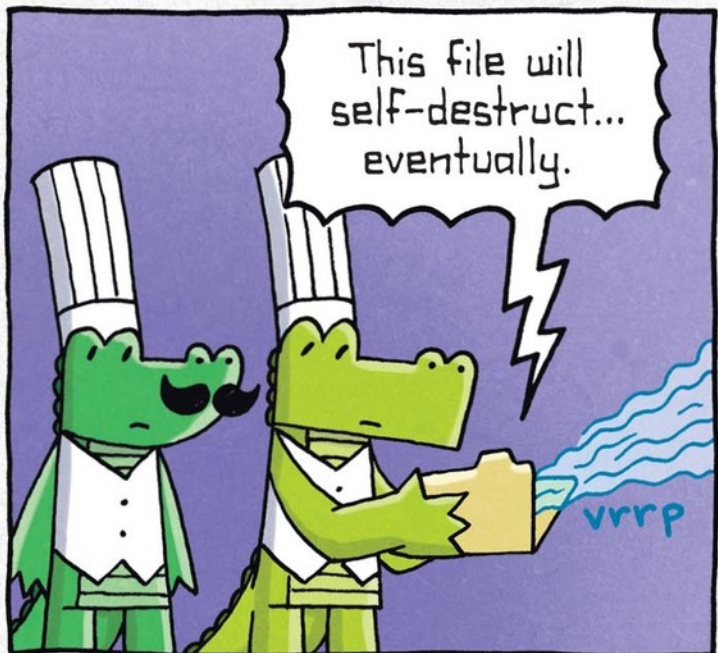
Your mission, Mango and Brash, is to find out **what happened** to Chef Gustavo and make sure his secret recipes are **safe!**



Don't worry, we're on the case!



This file will self-destruct... eventually.



I'm not getting on the case again.



You yelled at me last time.



Two weeks earlier...



What happened?
Where am I?



One minute I'm waxing my
handlebar mustache...



...the next, I'm behind bars!

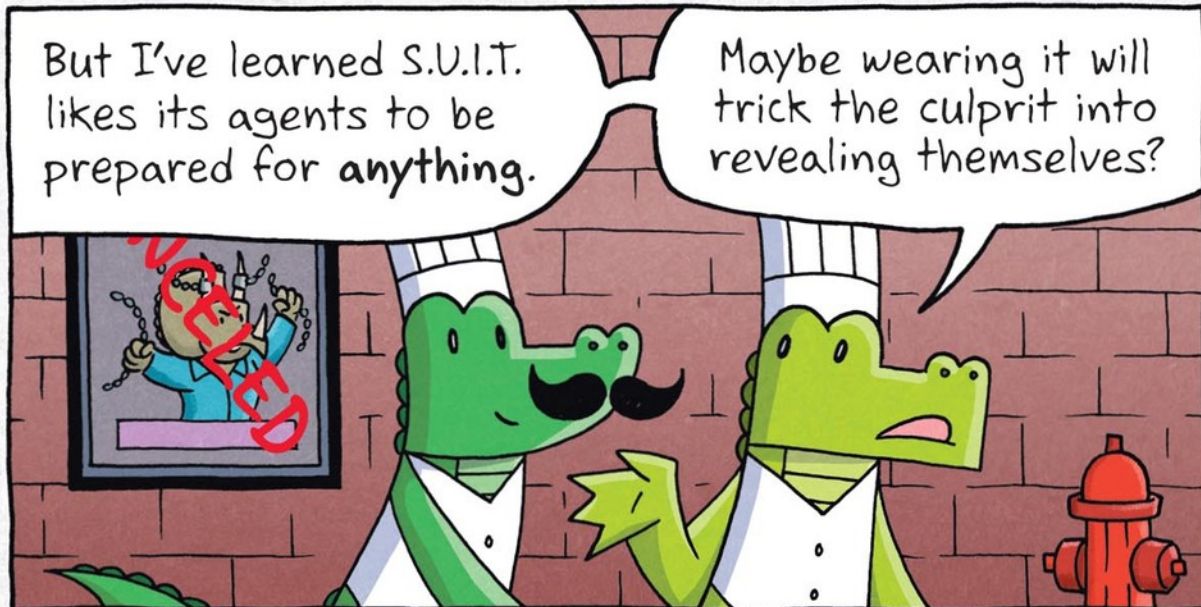


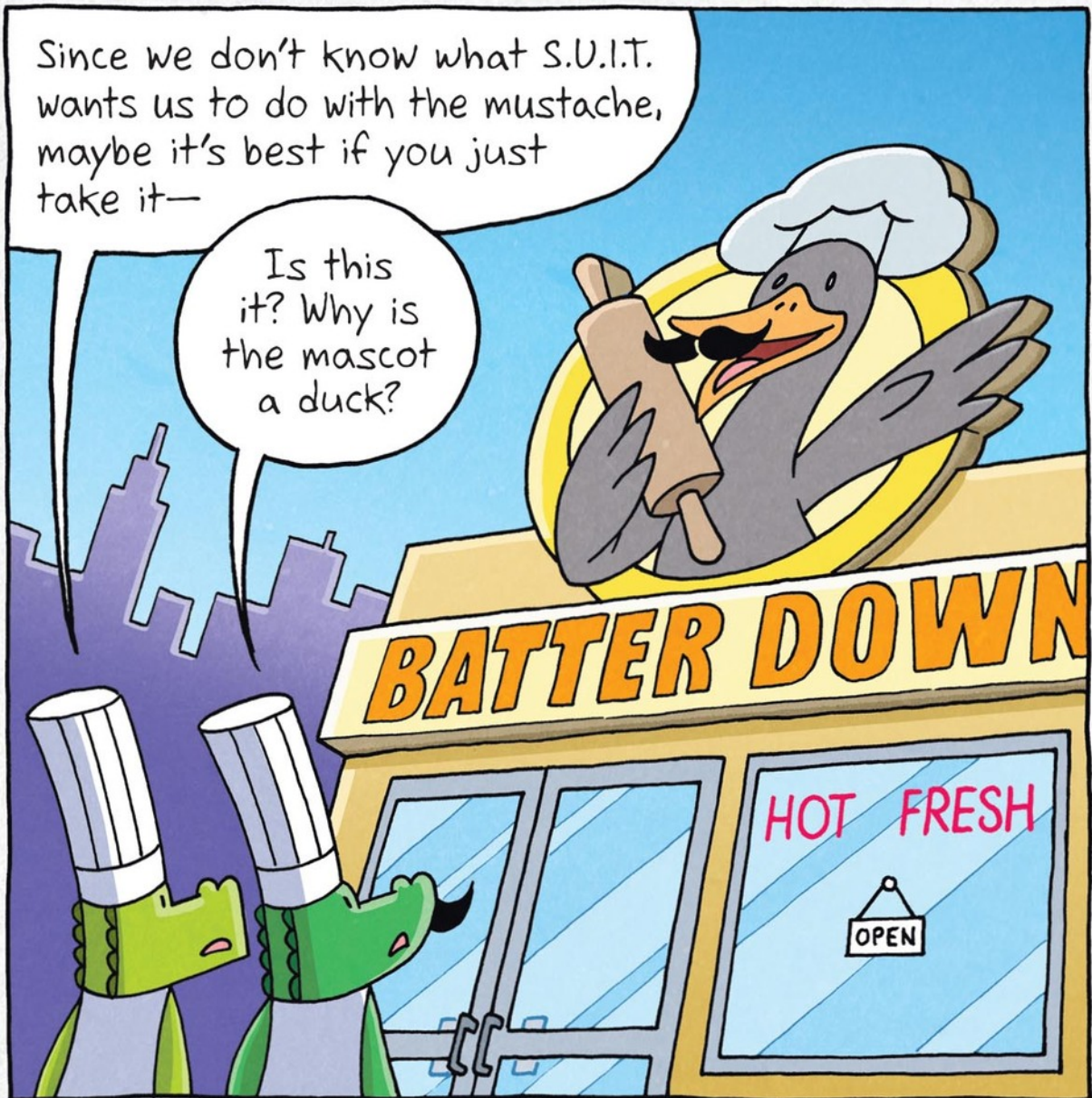
Hello? Anyone
there?

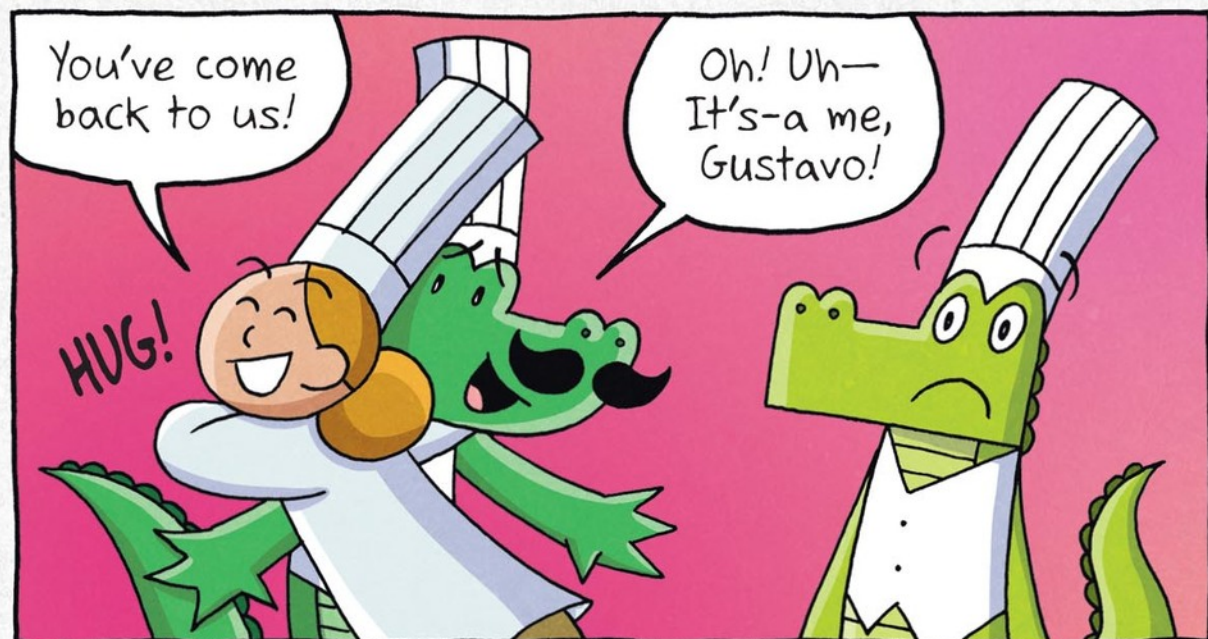




Chapter 2









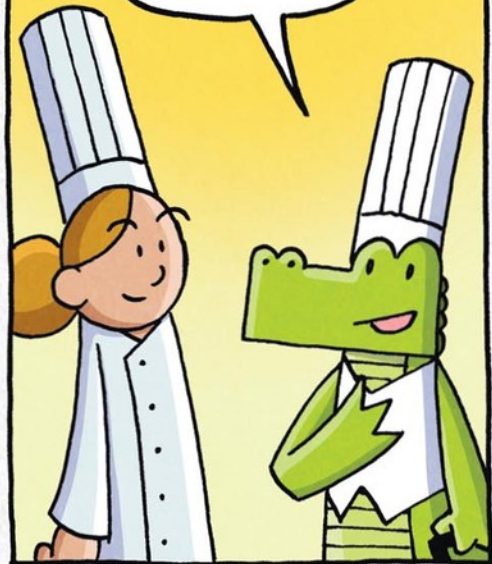
Huh. I thought everyone in accounting was a **SHARK**.



Oh well! What do I know? I'm Junior Assistant Baker Marie.

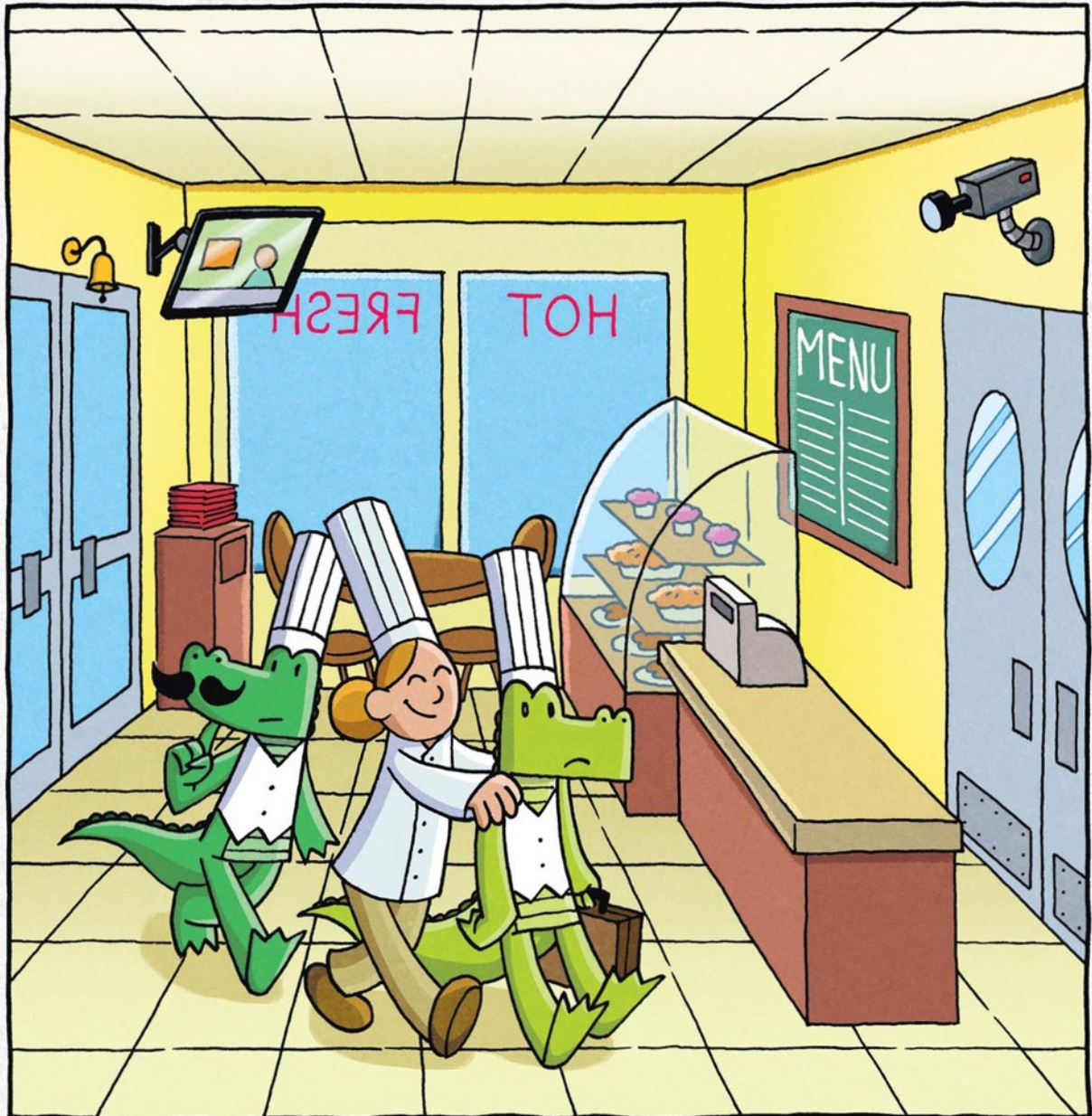


I'm Brash.

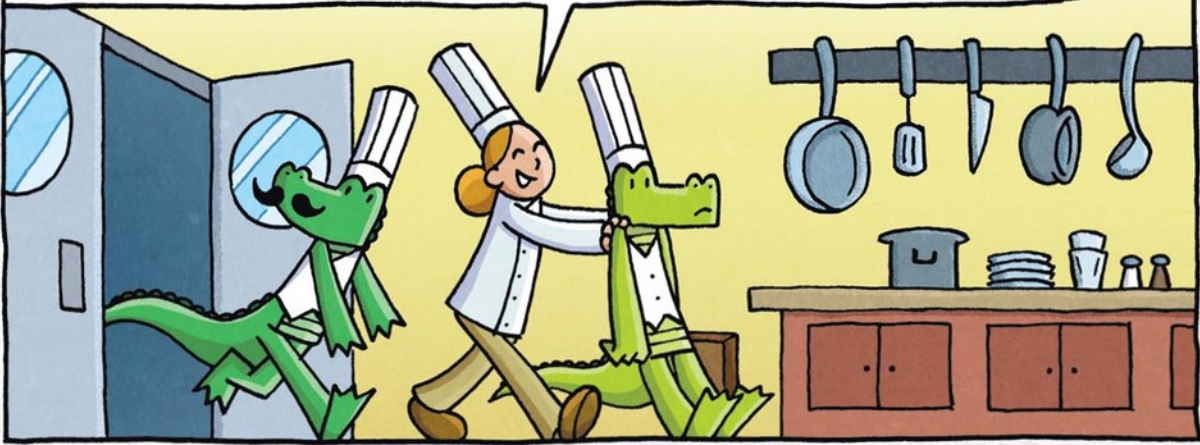


Ooh, is that the secret recipe for your latest culinary masterpiece, Gustavo?





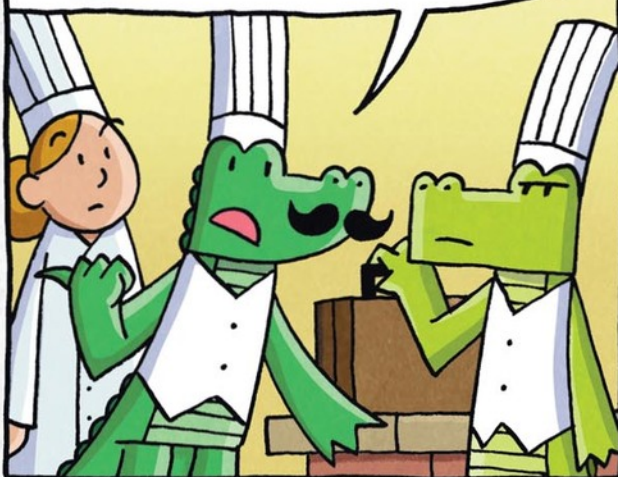
Right through here, to the Batter Down kitchen!



And now, if you'll get out the recipe, I can assemble the ingredients with the chef's permission.



You heard Junior Assistant Baker Marie. Hand over the recipe!

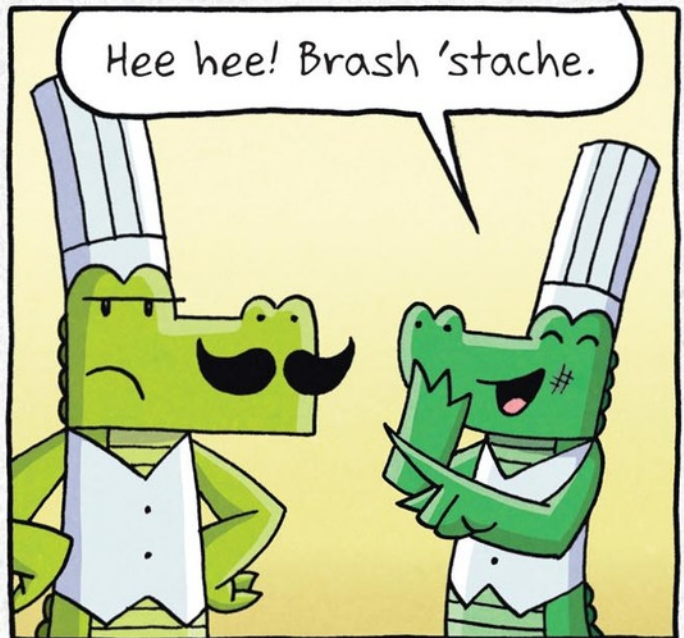
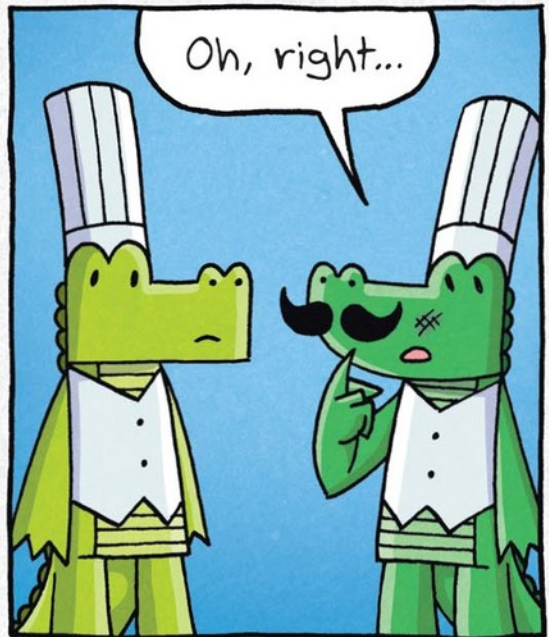






Yes! How right you are, Junior Assistant Baker Marie. Now, leave Chef Gustavo alone so the maestro can find his muse. I'll stay here for, um...legal purposes.





Sometime earlier, in a cool, dark place...

I h-h-have another
b-b-batch ready...



Hmm...



...no...



...WEAK! This
is no good!



That's just the way
the cookie crumbles!

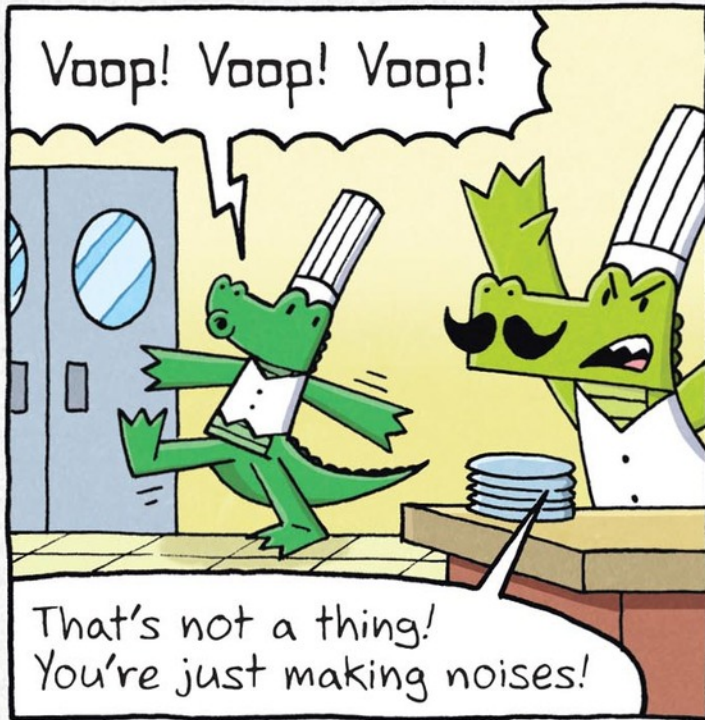
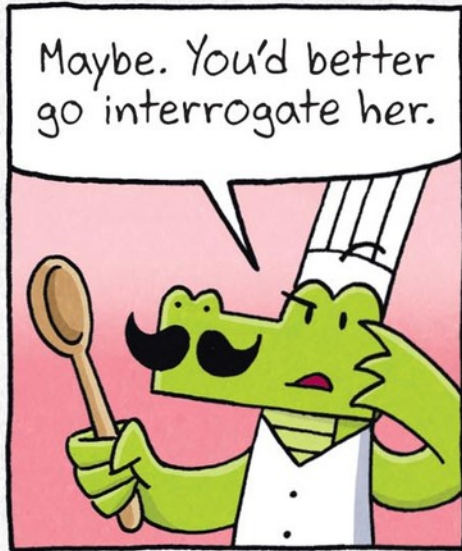


You're no baker!
You're a **FOOL!**





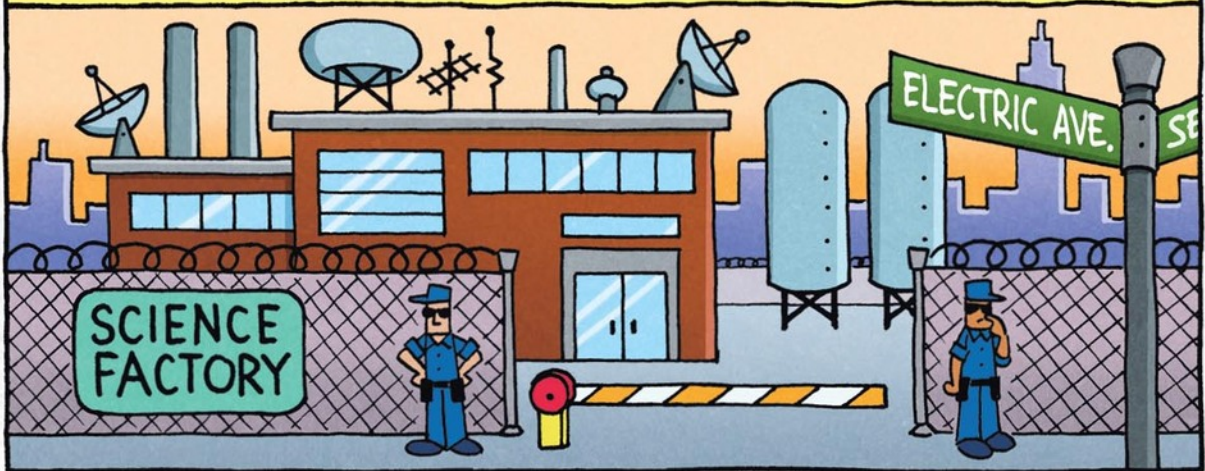
Chapter 3



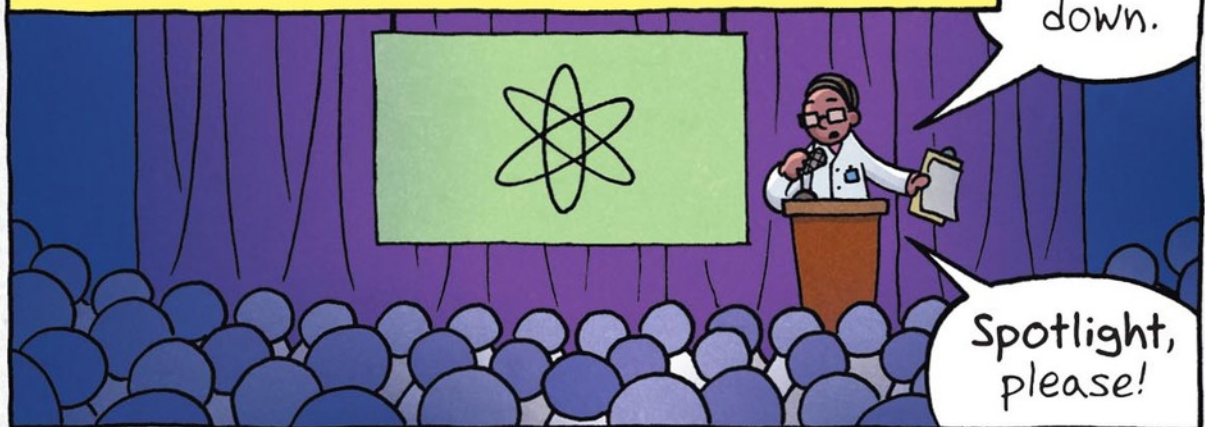




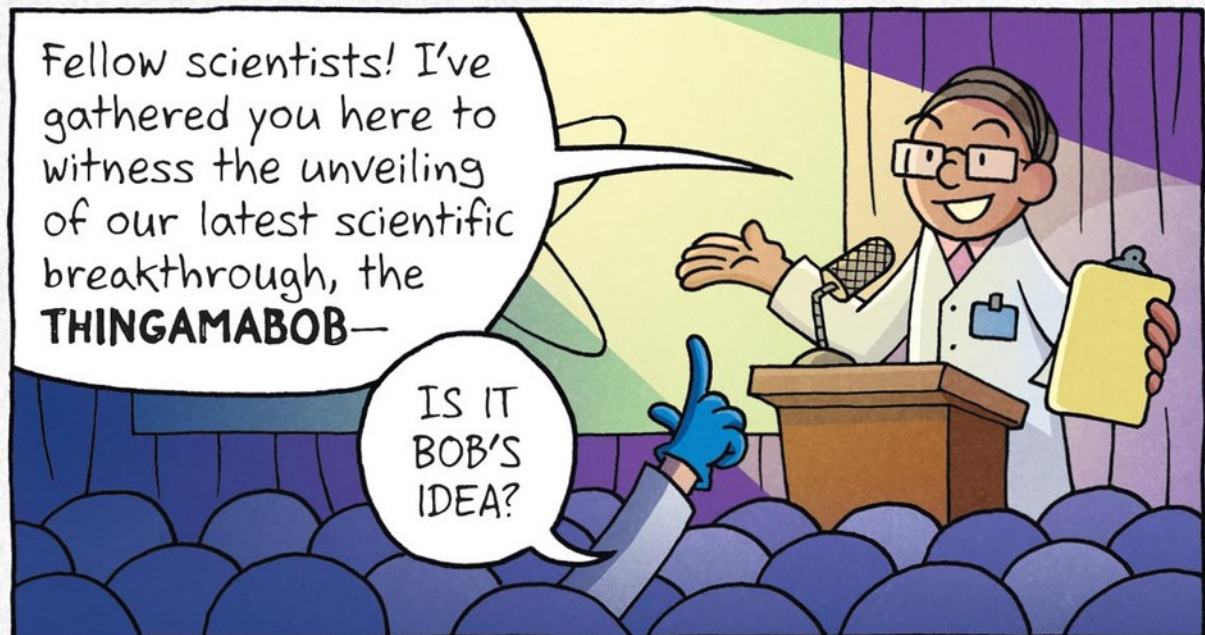
Meanwhile, across town, something totally unrelated is going down at the *Science Factory*!

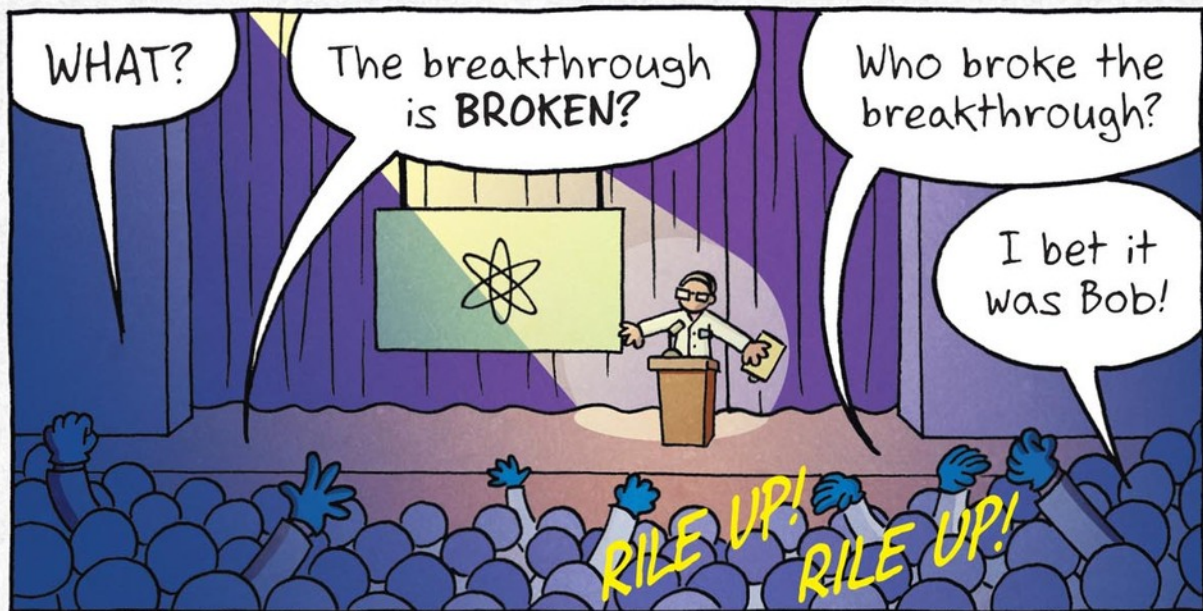
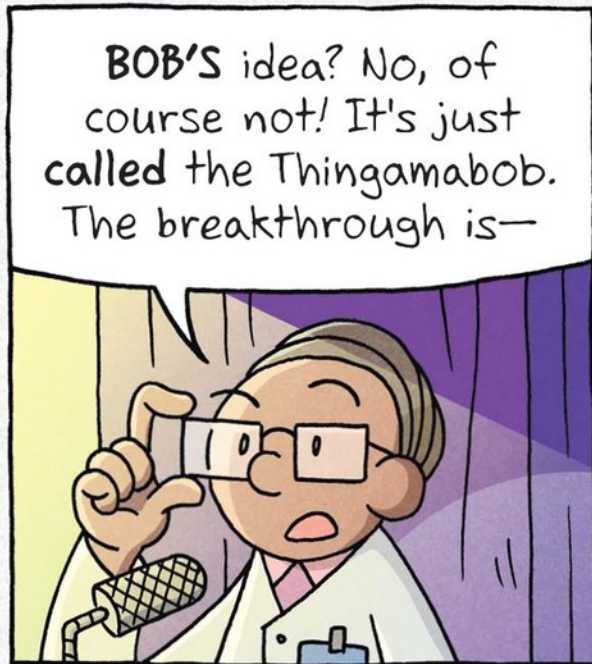


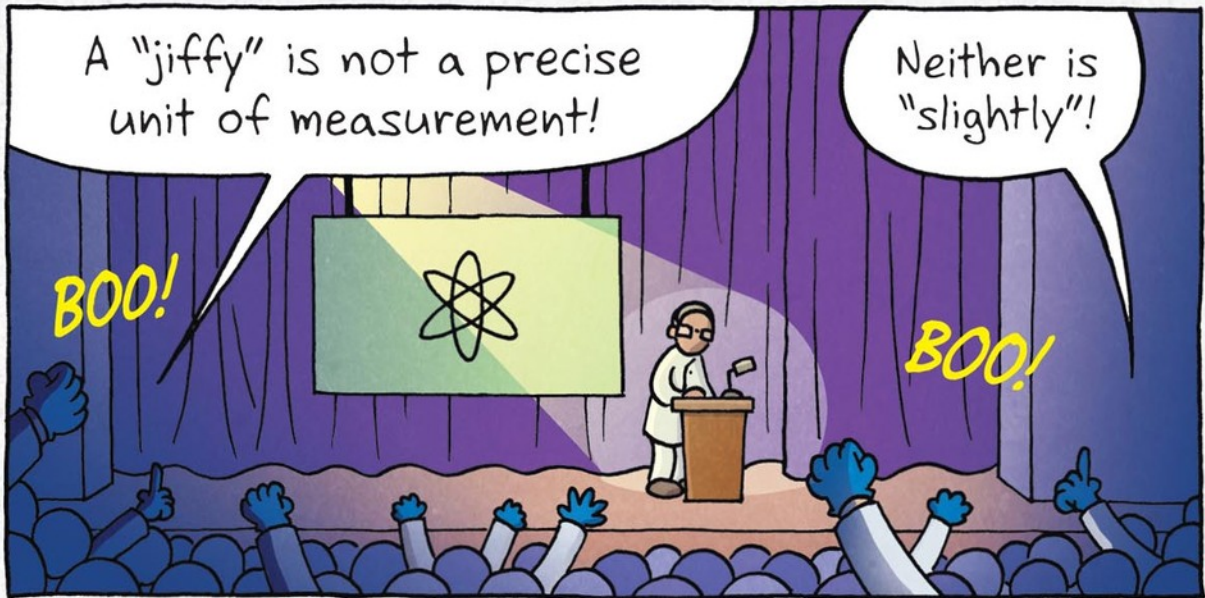
Inside, where all the science is made, the *Head Scientist* is about to reveal their latest scientific breakthrough to the world!

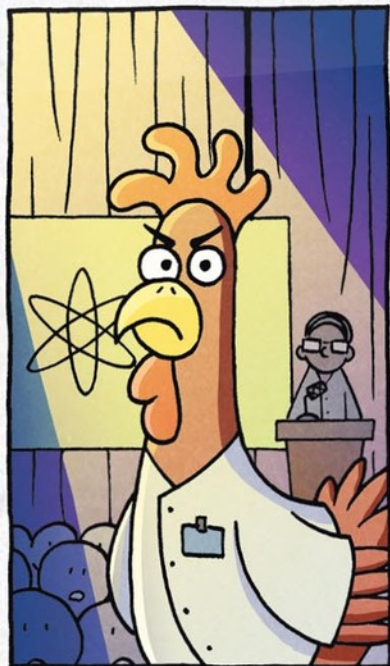
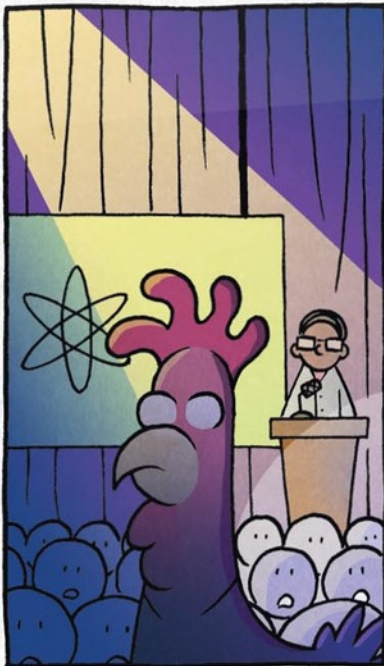
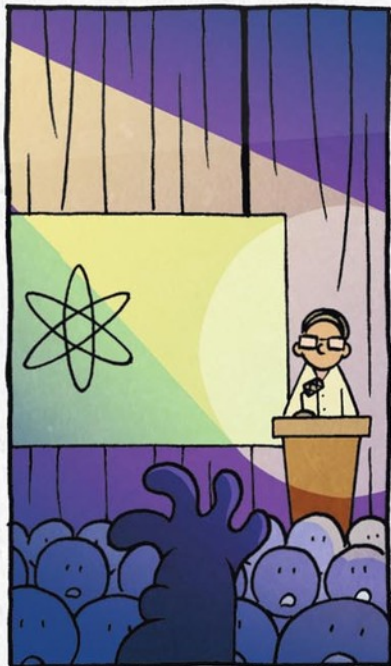
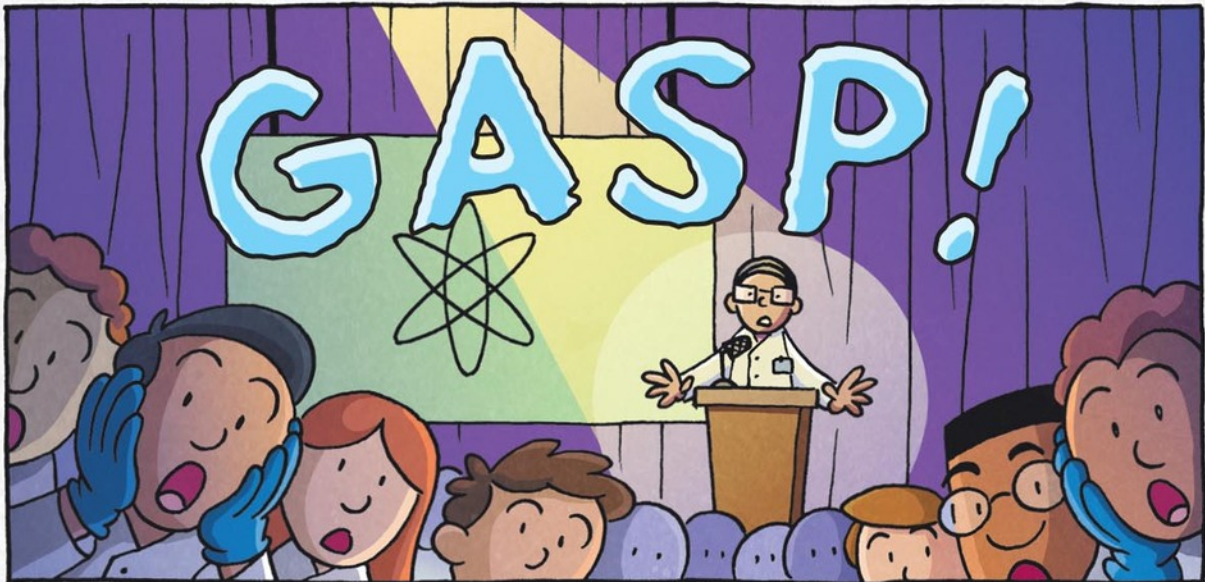


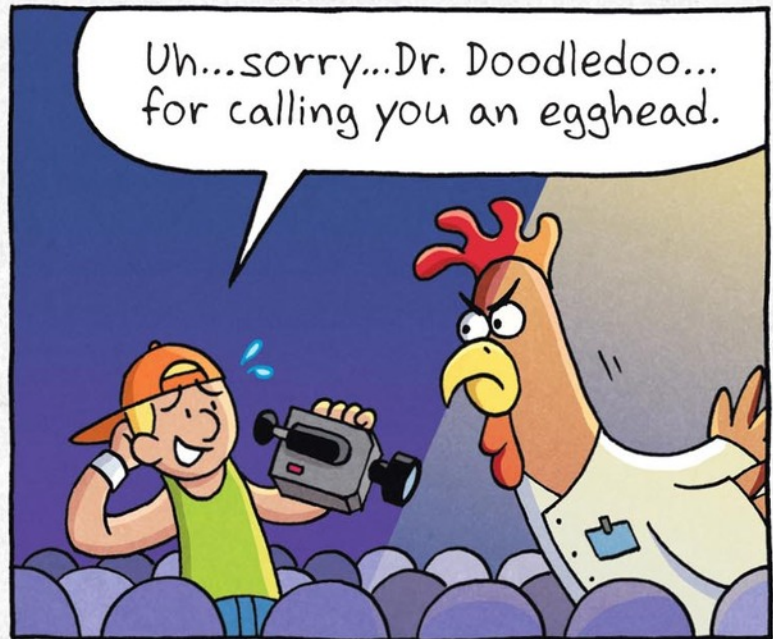
Fellow scientists! I've gathered you here to witness the unveiling of our latest scientific breakthrough, the **THINGAMABOB**—

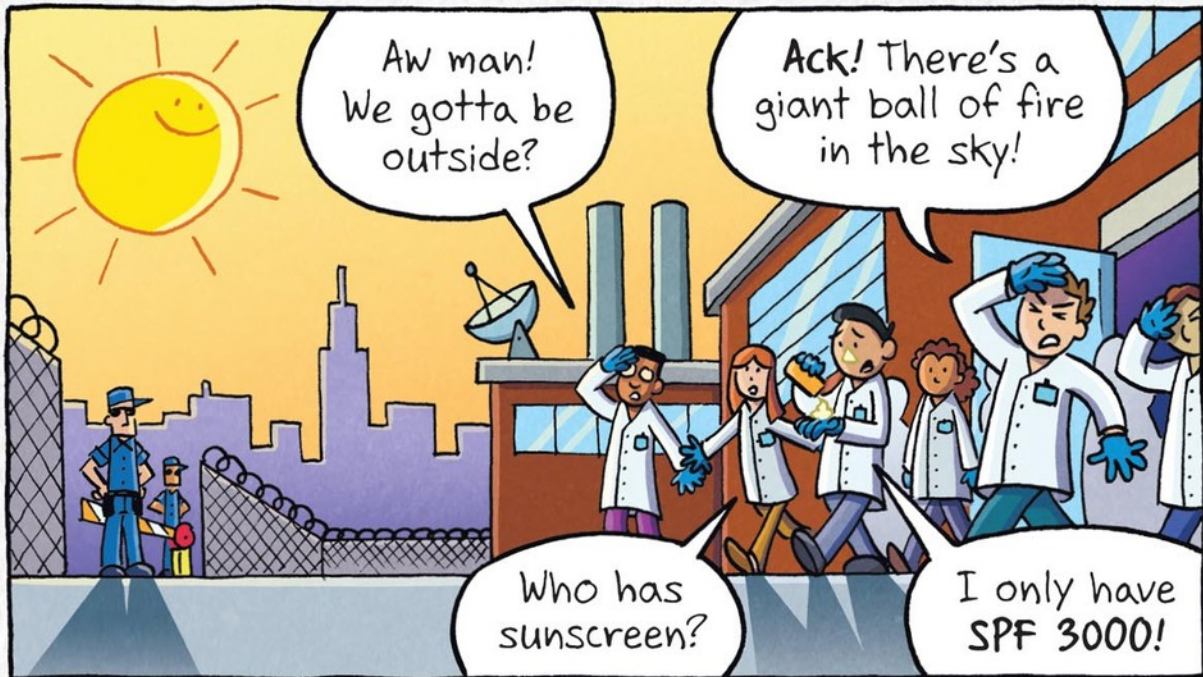


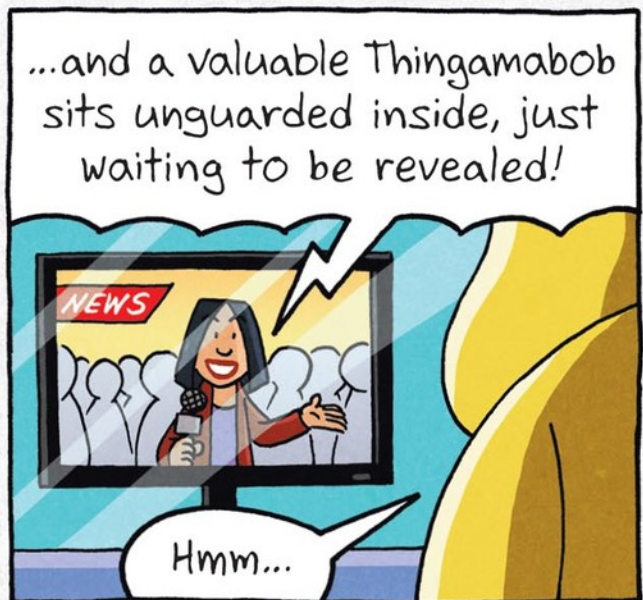
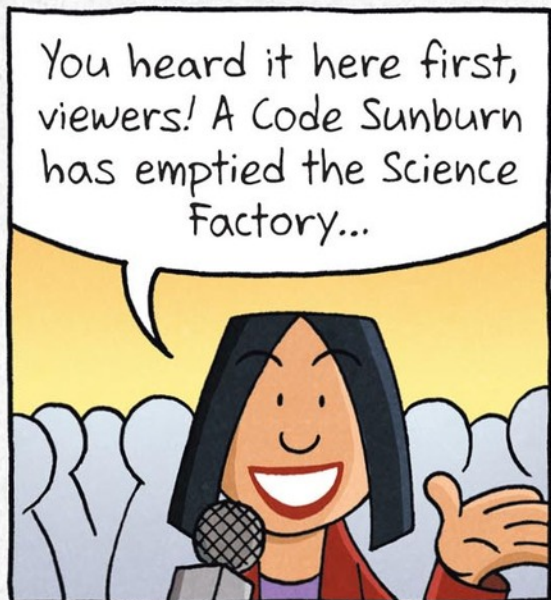
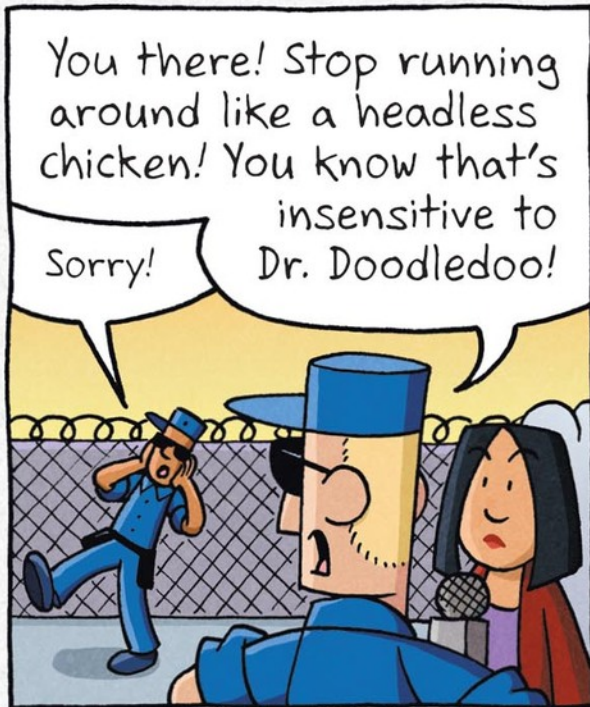












Chapter 4





Oh! The Mango Mustache!



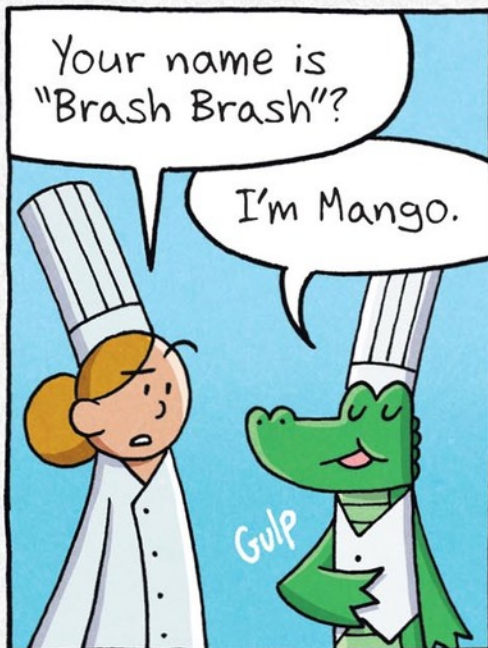
That's one of our top-selling fruit-filled croissants.



Don't you wish you could come up with such amazing recipes, Mister Brash?



Brath ith hith firtht name. Wait—latht name?



Your name is "Brash Brash"?

I'm Mango.



NO, WAIT! HE'S Mango. NO! He's GUSTAVO! Because he has the MUSTACHE! I'M Brash!

Now, then! when I, Brash—NO, Gustavo Brashstachio—NO, **GUSTAVO MUSTACHIO**—went missing for two weeks, did you, Marie, think to alert anyone?



Alert?

Oh, the **Red Alert!** That's our red velvet cupcake topped with a jalapeño pepper.



It's like a five-alarm fire in your mouth!



Have a bite!



No thanks, I'm full.

Aw, just one bite.



That's okay.

One. Little. Bite.



Uh...





Gustavo, that's me—**I MEAN**—that's the other guy!



Wow, this cake you want is **HUGE!** You could fit a dinosaur in this thing.



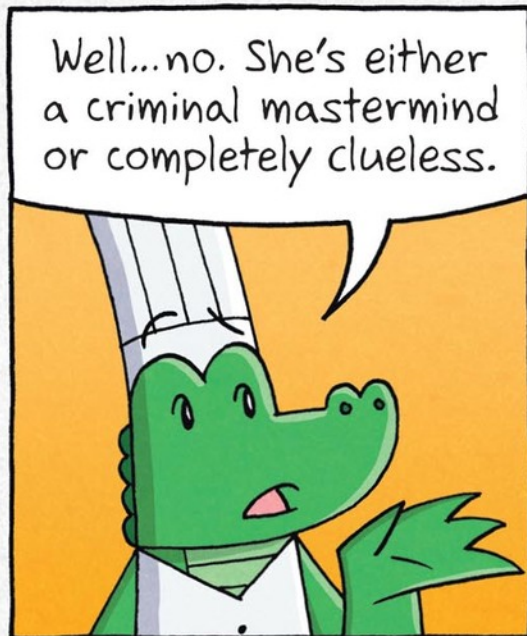
Yes. And make it snappy.



We're alligators. **SNAPPY** is what we do best!



I MEAN—I'll get this to Chef Gustavo right away!



The **BIG OVEN**
is missing!



Oh
no!

Right? Clearly its
disappearance must
have something to
do with Gustavo's
disappearance.



No, I mean, how
are we gonna bake
this cake now?!



Oh, well, luckily we can bake it in this **EVEN BIGGER OVEN!**



Doesn't that just mean **THAT'S** the big oven and the one that's missing is the *medium* oven?



HEY, which one of us is Chef Gustavo?





YOINK!



I AM!



Bah! We don't have time for an identity crisis!



Let's just bake this cake, then get back to our investigation!



Activate montage mode!
Voop voop!



That's not a thing!

♪ ♪ Investigators, bakin' a cake! ♪ ♪



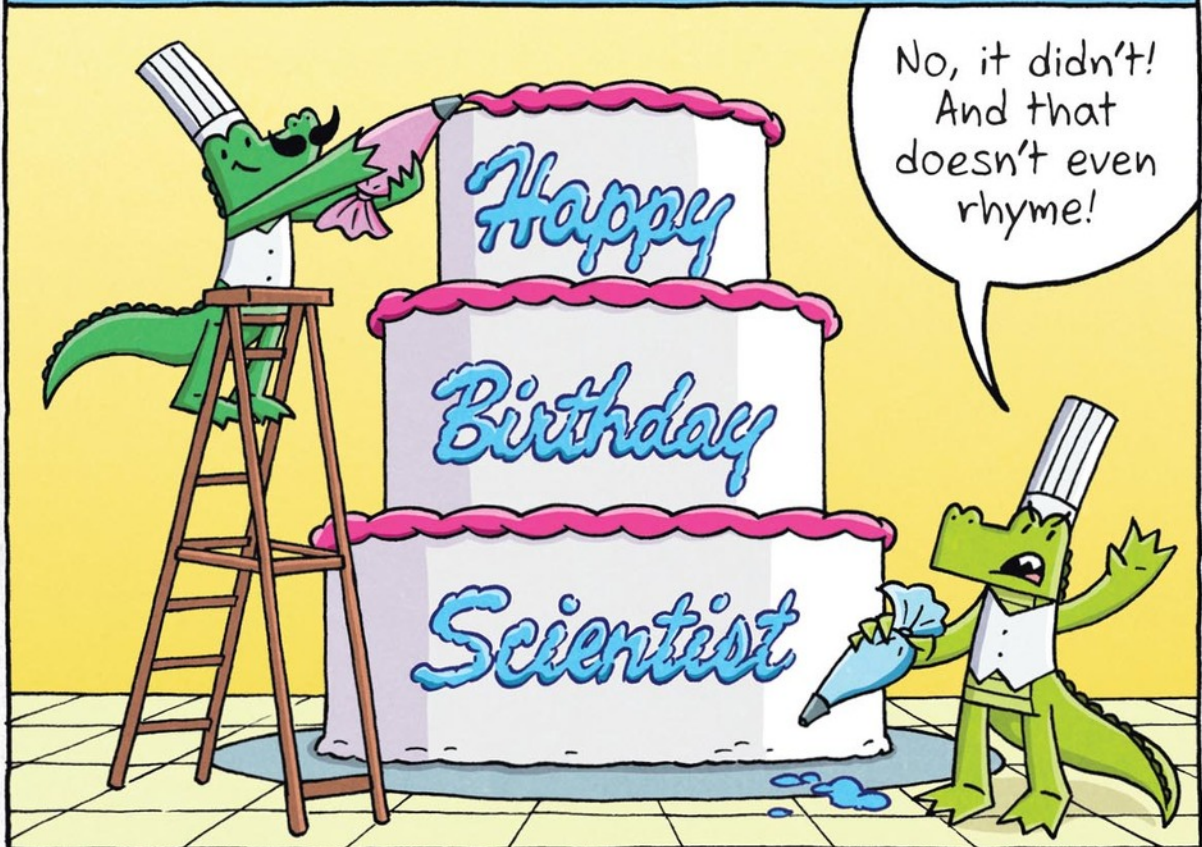
♪ Is it even a thing that they know how to make? ♪



♪ They used eggs and flour and unsalted butter! ♪

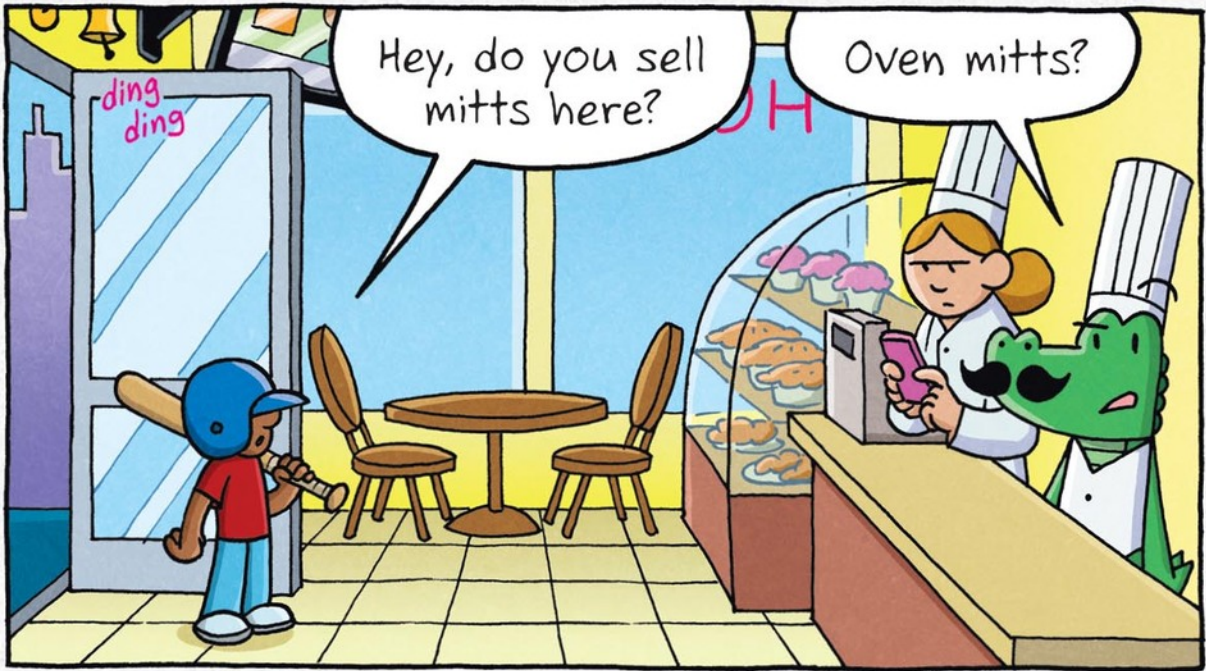


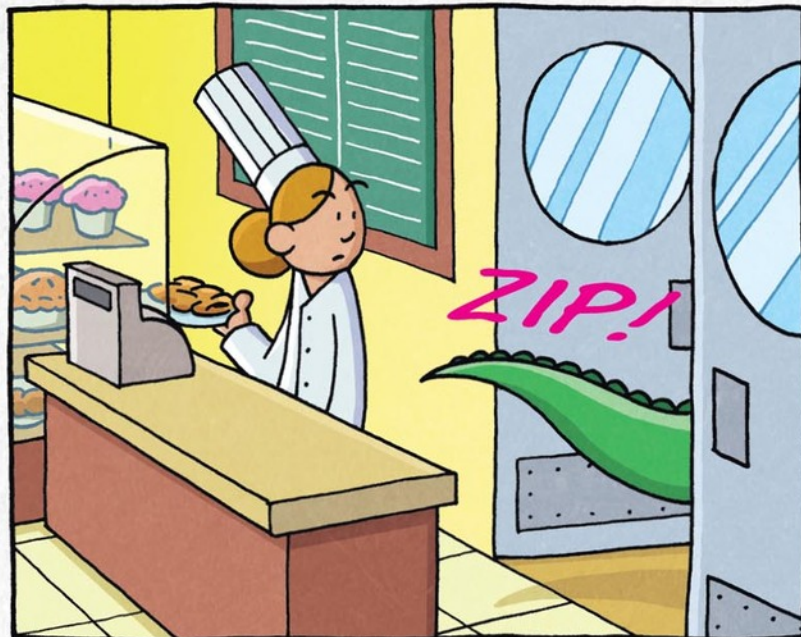
♪ And it took them an hour to spell "scientist"! ♪









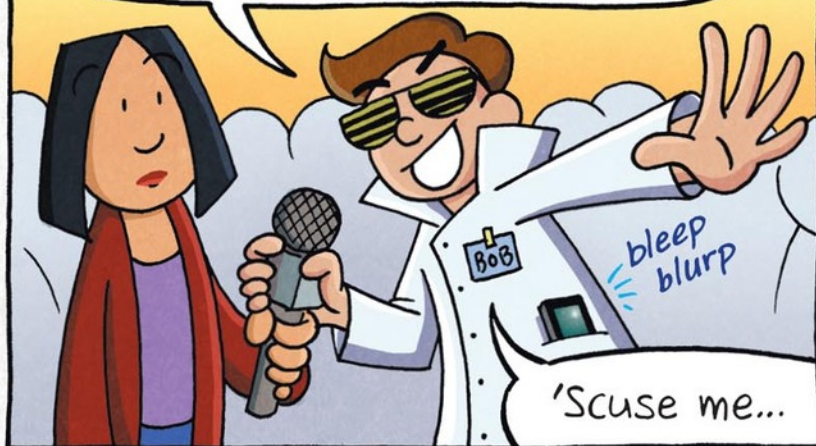


Chapter 5

Cici Boringstories here, reporting outside the Science Factory. With me is **SCIENTIST BOB**. Tell us, Bob, what's this scientific breakthrough you're cooking up inside?



Ha ha! I won't tell you what **I'M** cookin', Susan, but I will tell you it'll blow this breakthrough—



U done yet?

Need more time.

They're on 2 me :{

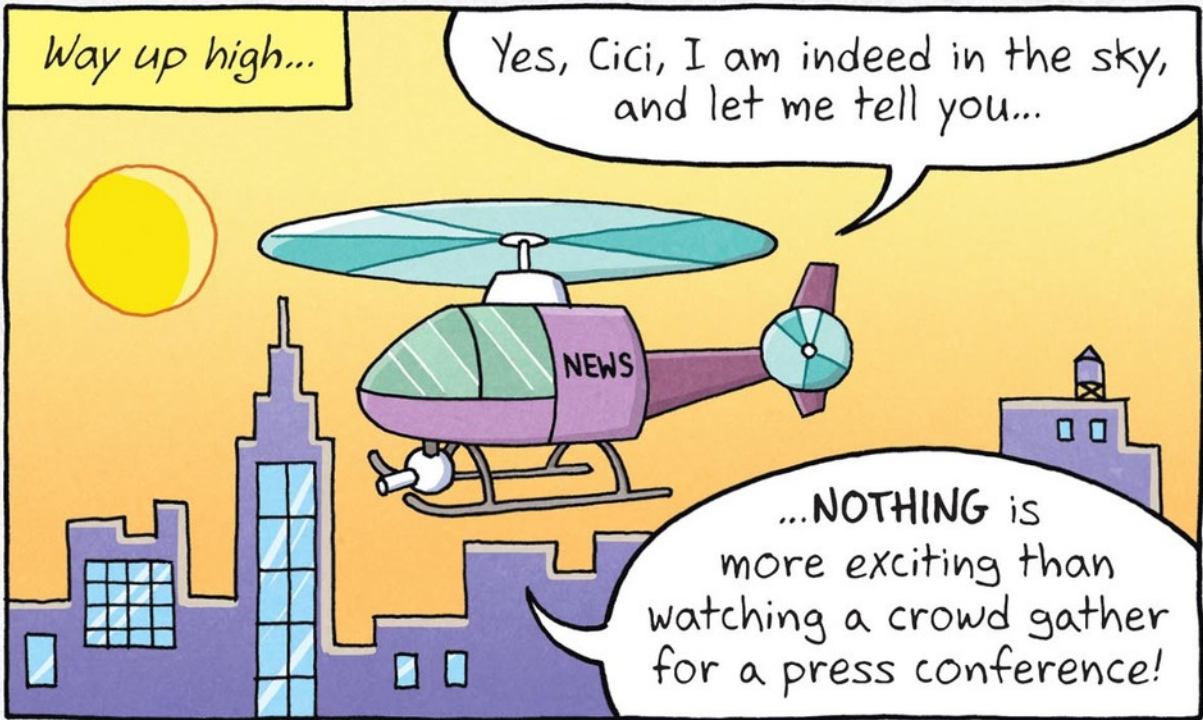


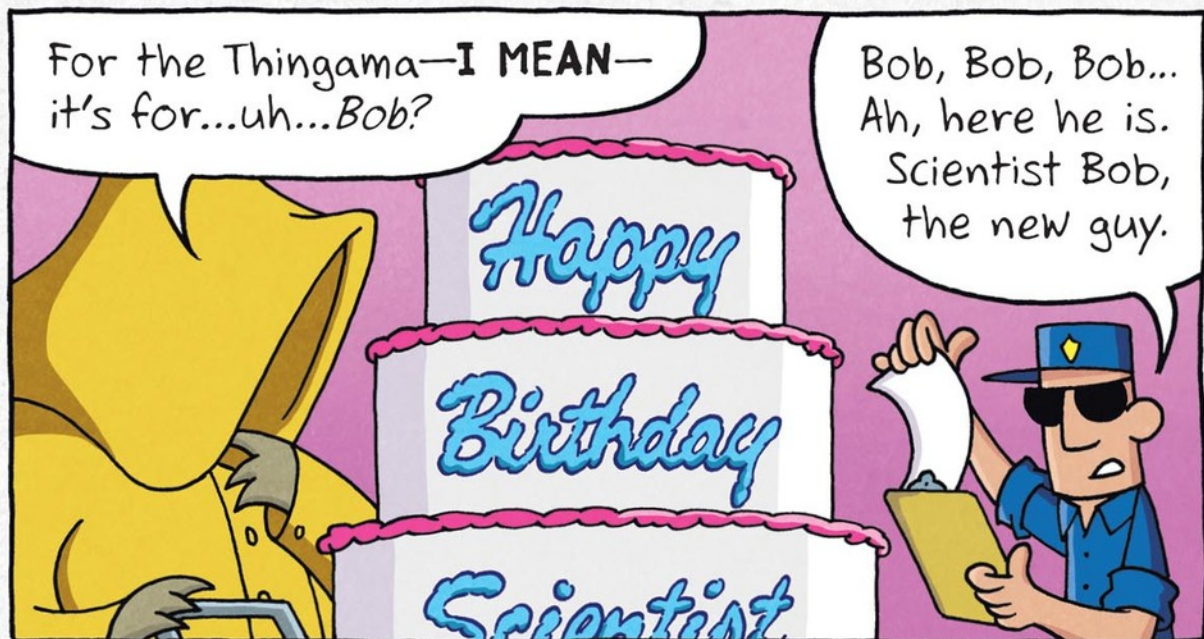
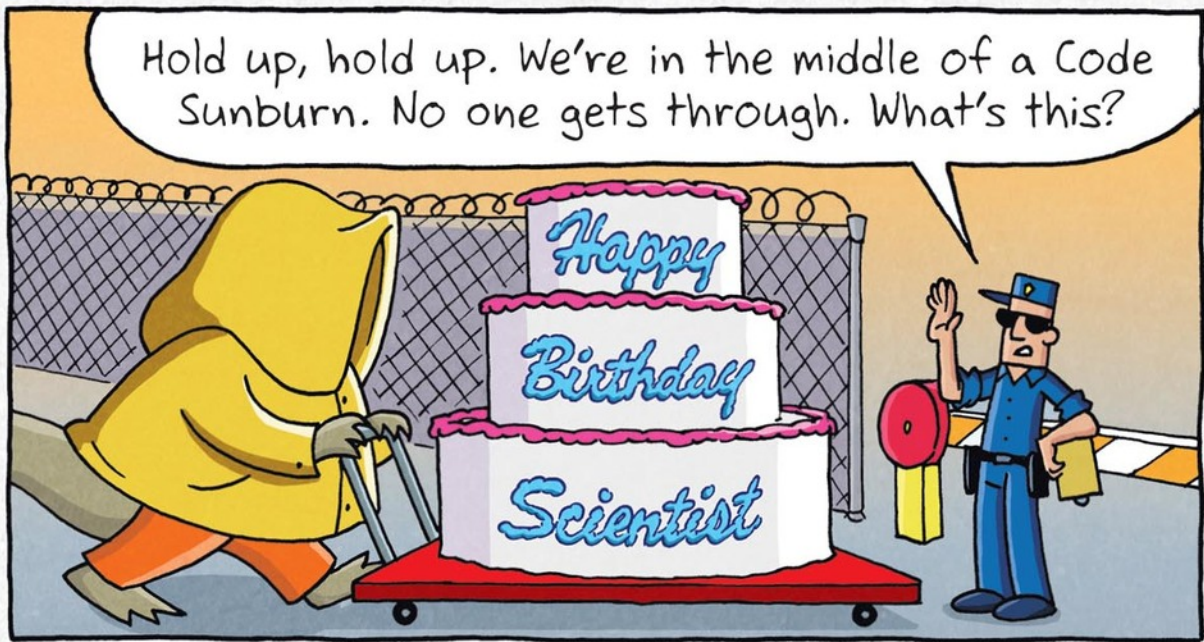
Sorry, Sophie. Scientist Bob's gotta motor!



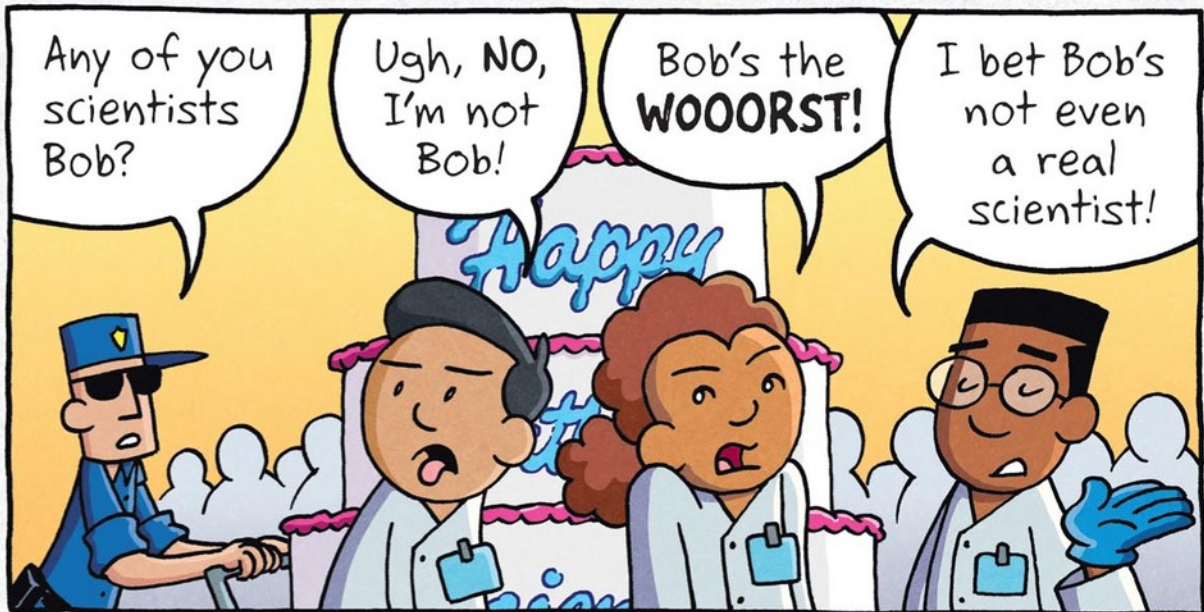
Well, that wasn't informative at all. Soooooooo let's check in with the Action News Now helicopter in the sky!

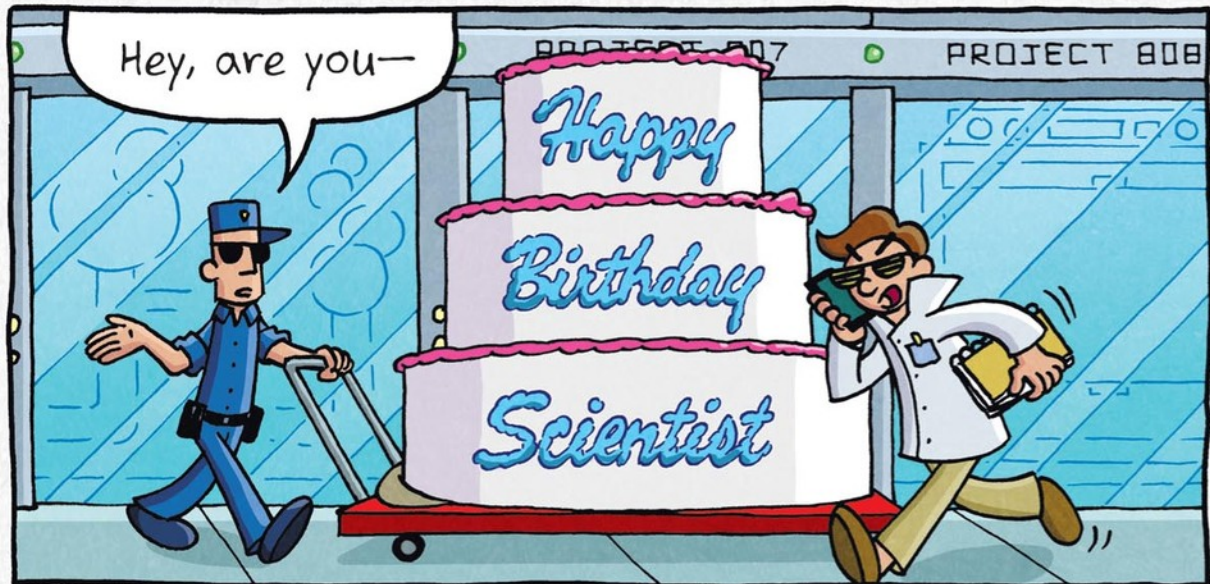






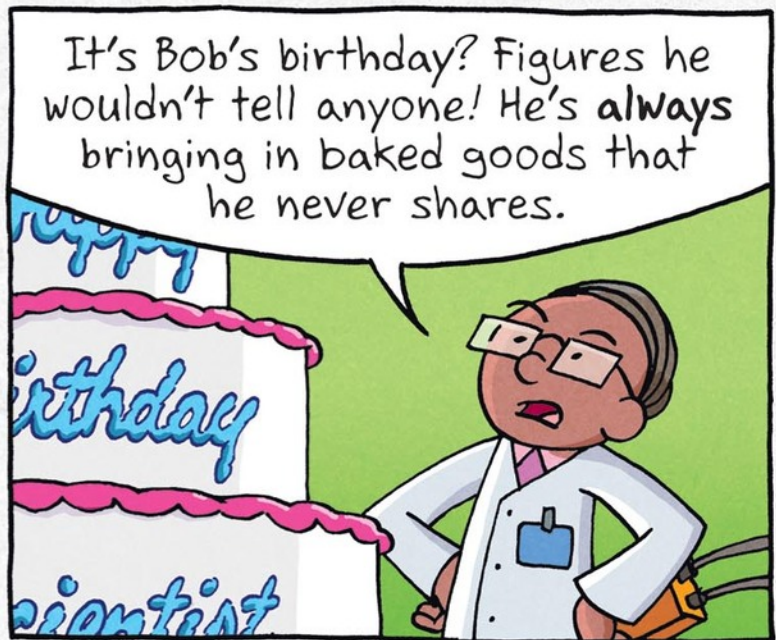




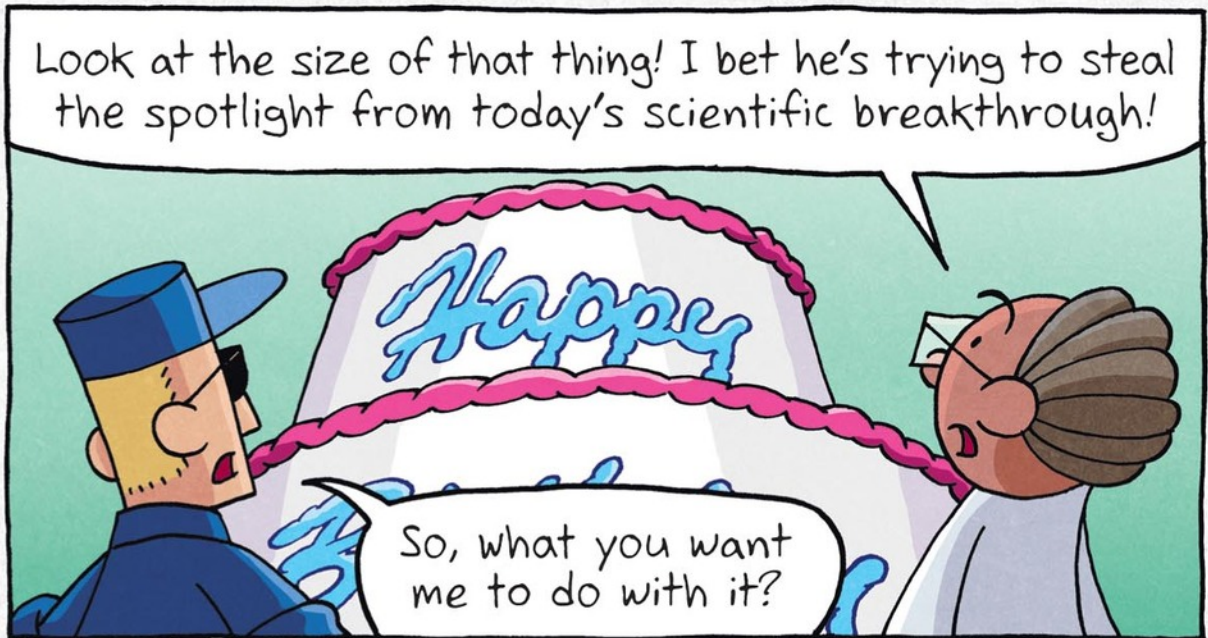




Birthday cake for Bob.



It's Bob's birthday? Figures he wouldn't tell anyone! He's always bringing in baked goods that he never shares.



Look at the size of that thing! I bet he's trying to steal the spotlight from today's scientific breakthrough!

So, what you want me to do with it?



Eh, leave it here. I'll deal with it later.



And...there! All working again!



Soon the world will know the true nature of this, our **THINGAMABOB!**

Wait—I'm not calling it that anymore. I don't wanna give Bob the satisfaction.



How about... **THINGAMASTEVE?**

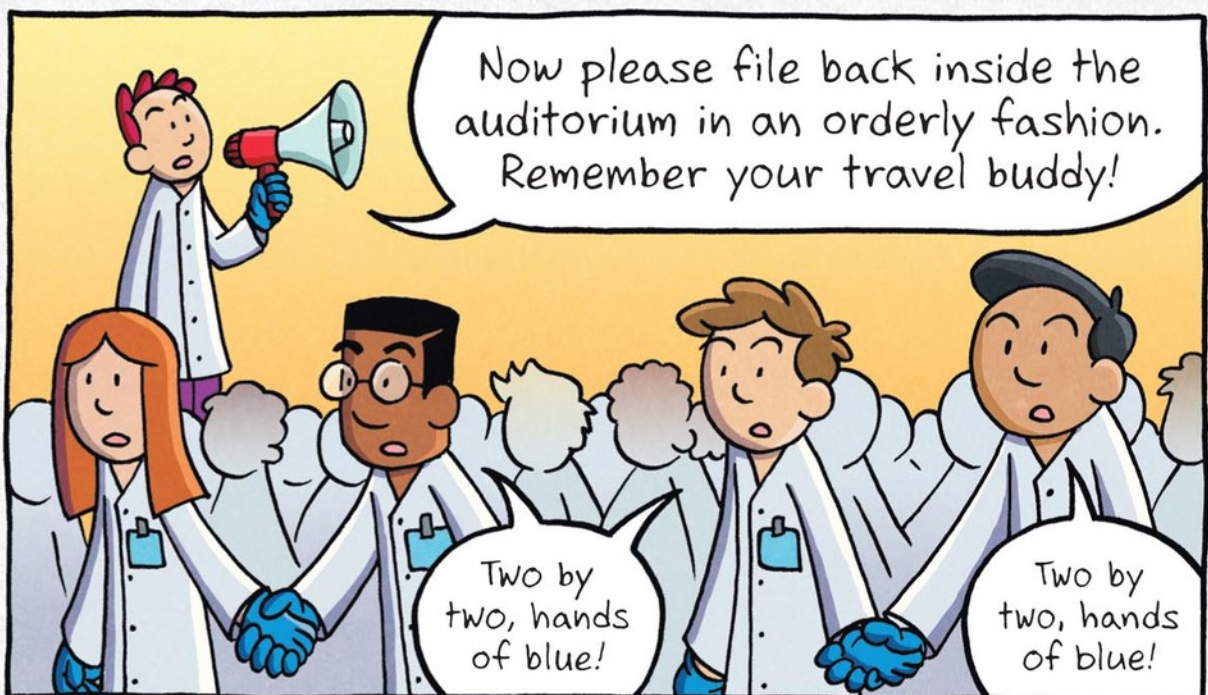
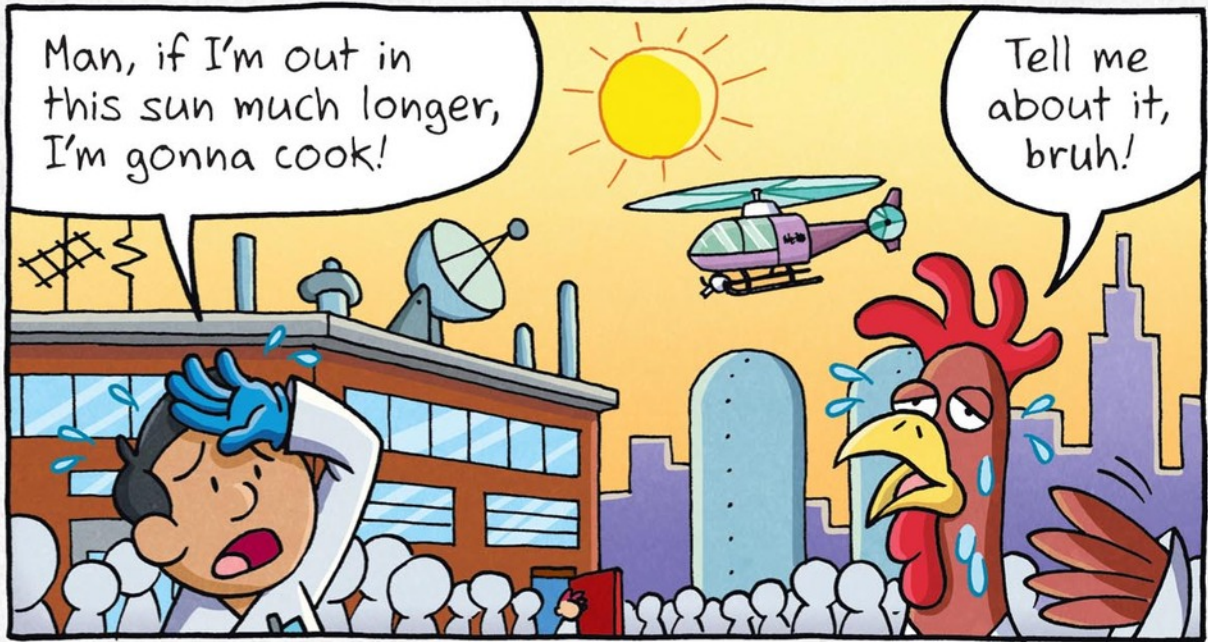
Ooh, that works! Steve's an okay guy.

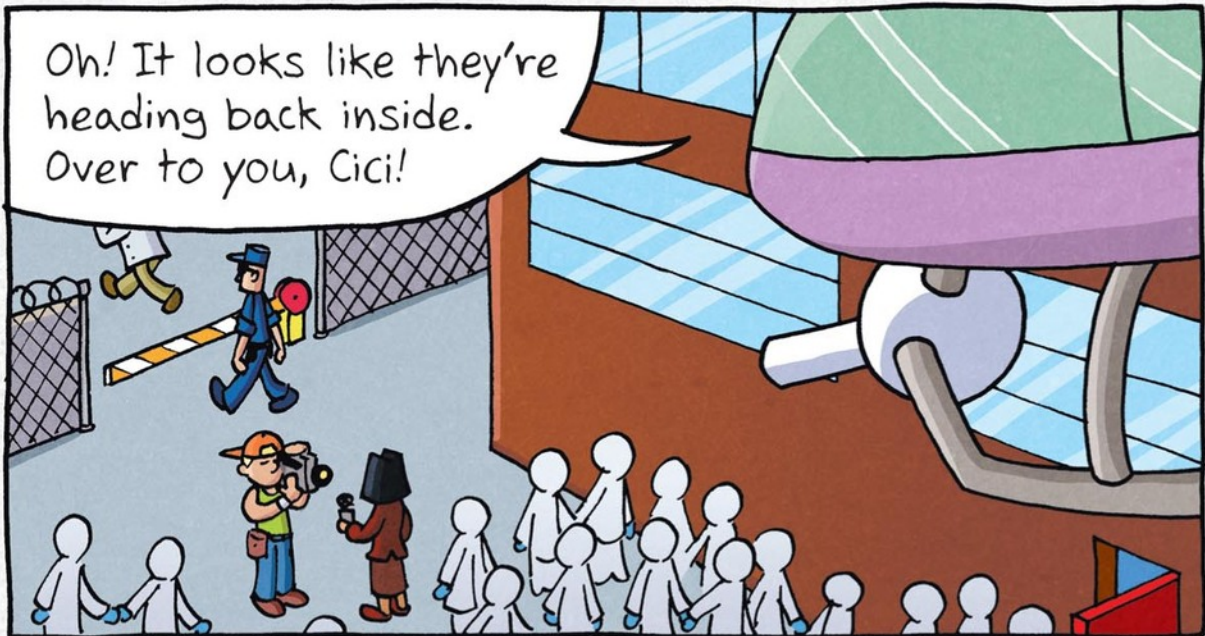
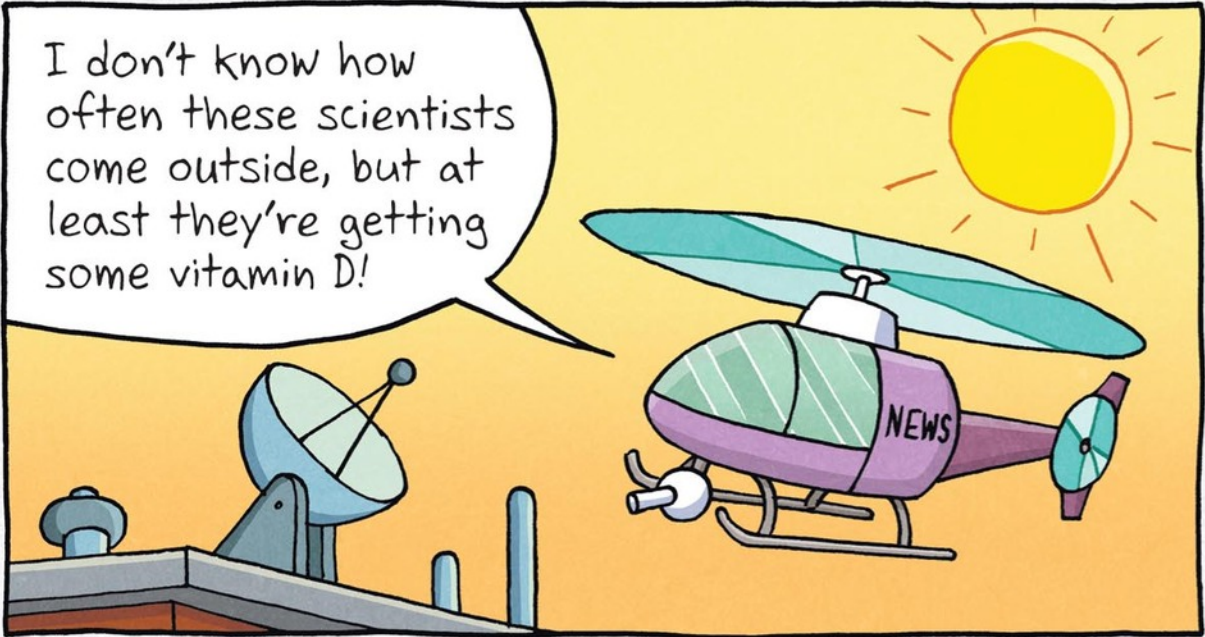


Now, run along outside and tell everyone recess is over.

Aye, aye!





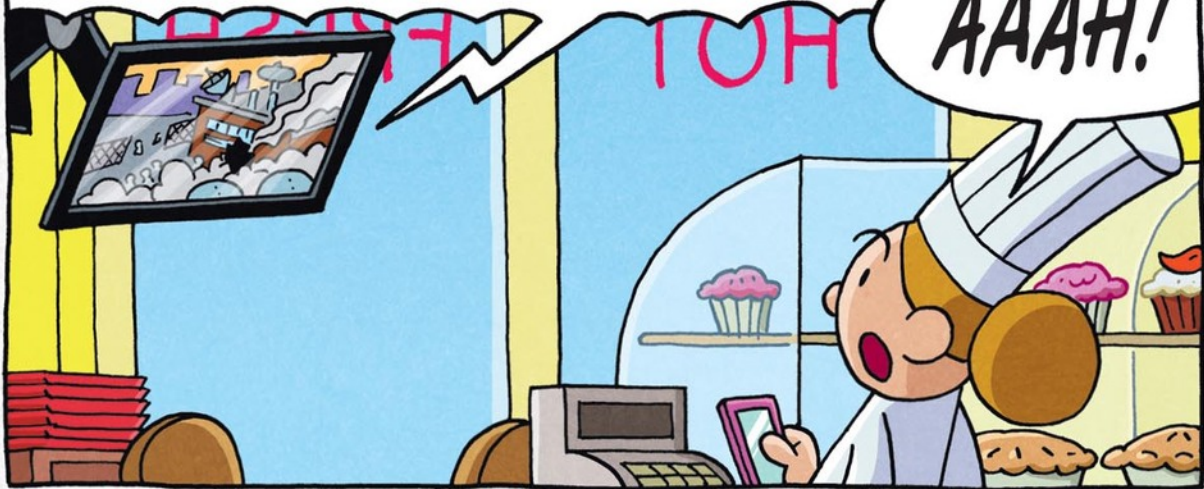


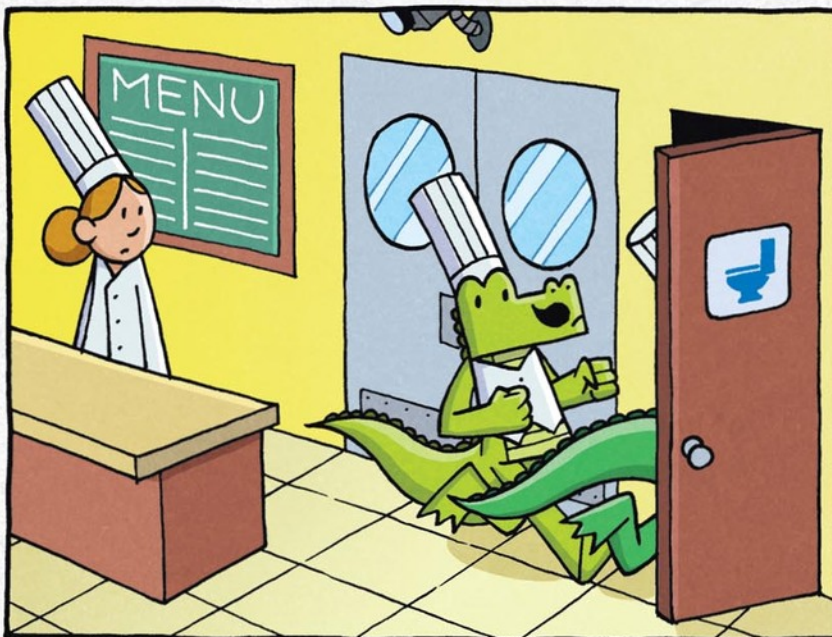


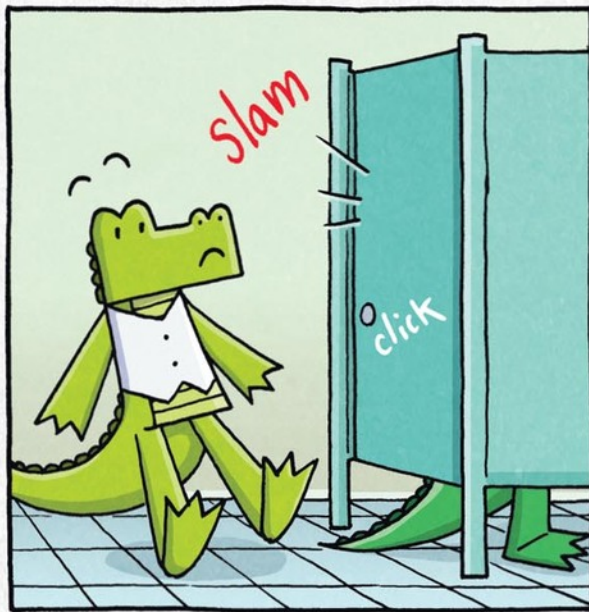


Chapter 6

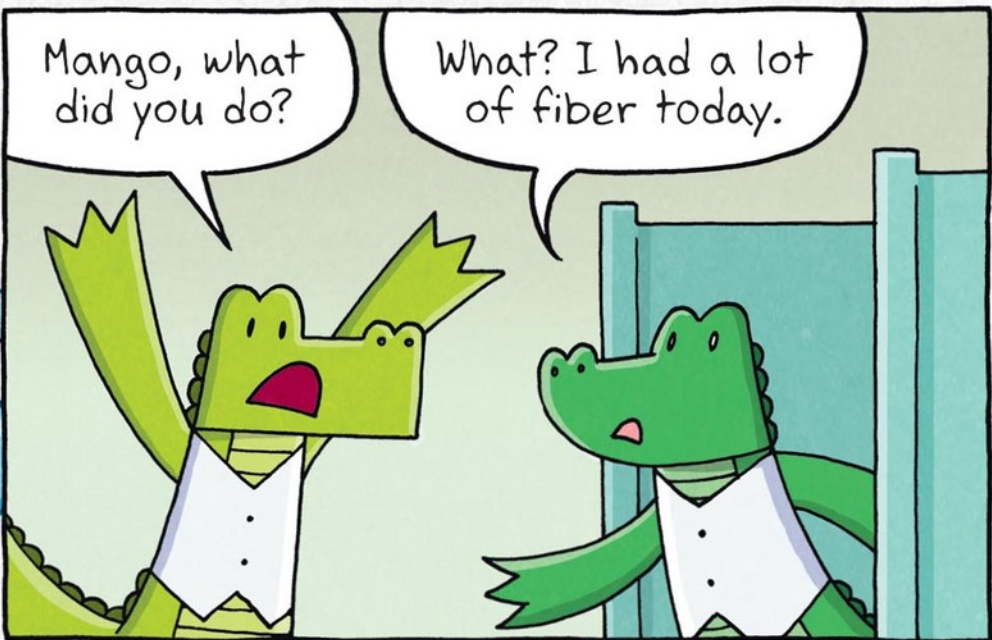
This is the *Action News Now* helicopter in the sky! An **EXPLOSION** has just **ROCKED** the Science Factory down on Electric Avenue!

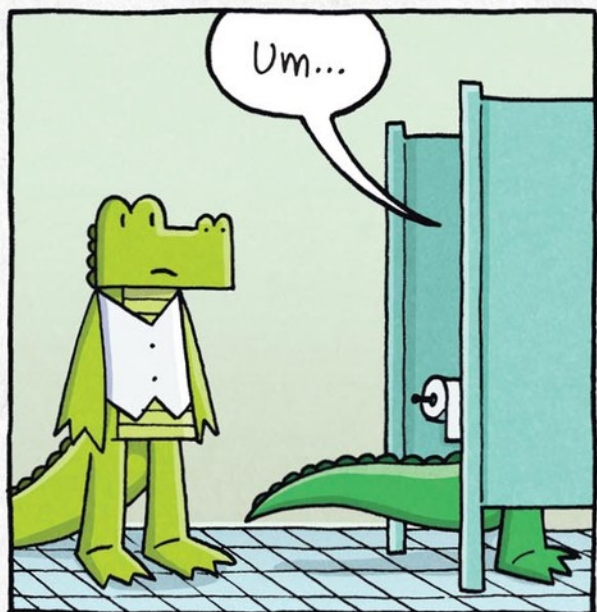
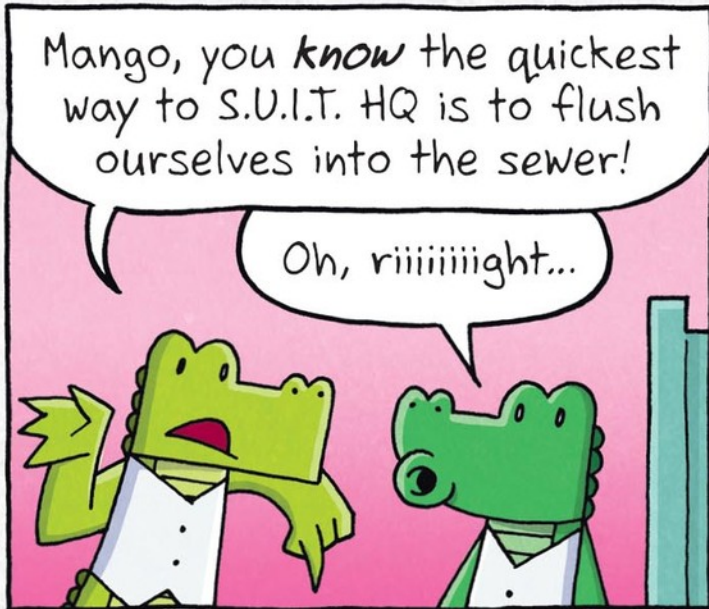






FLUSH





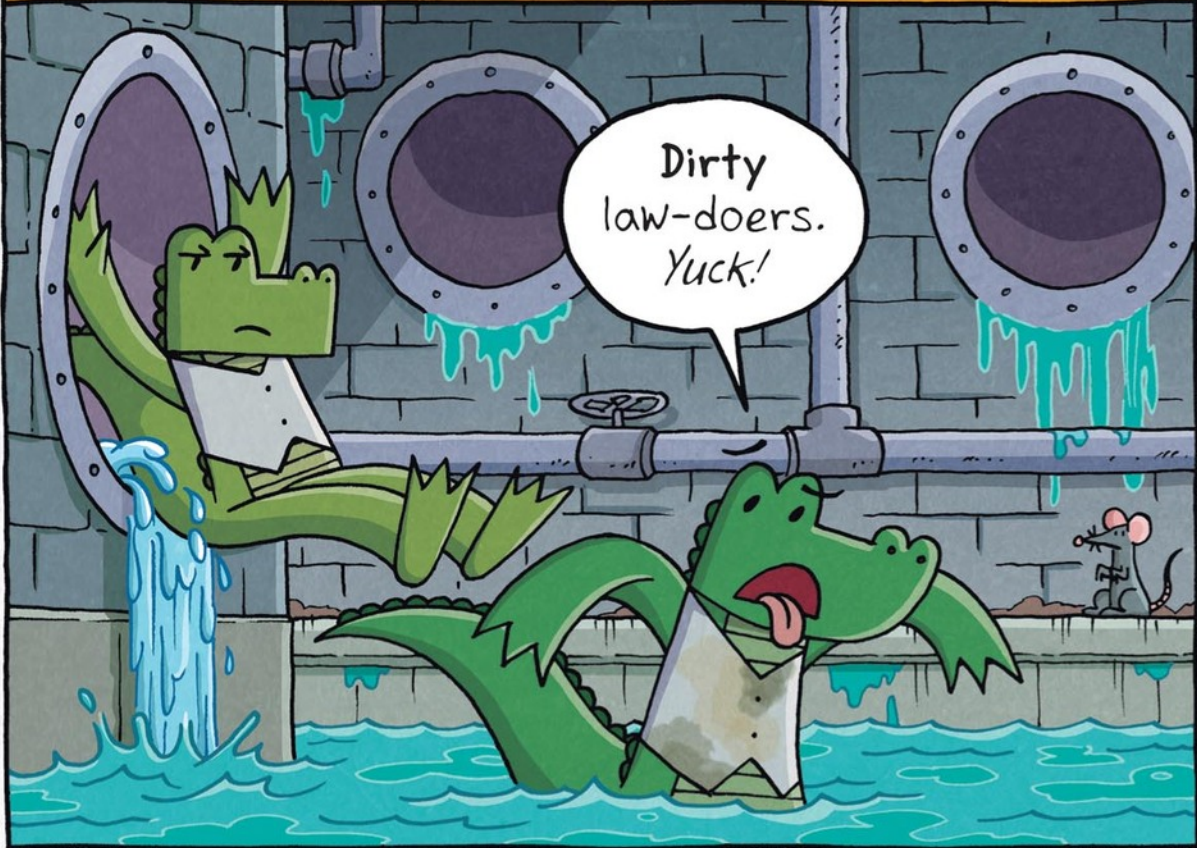
I'm just gonna flush a couple times so there's, like, a buffer between our *business* and...my "business."



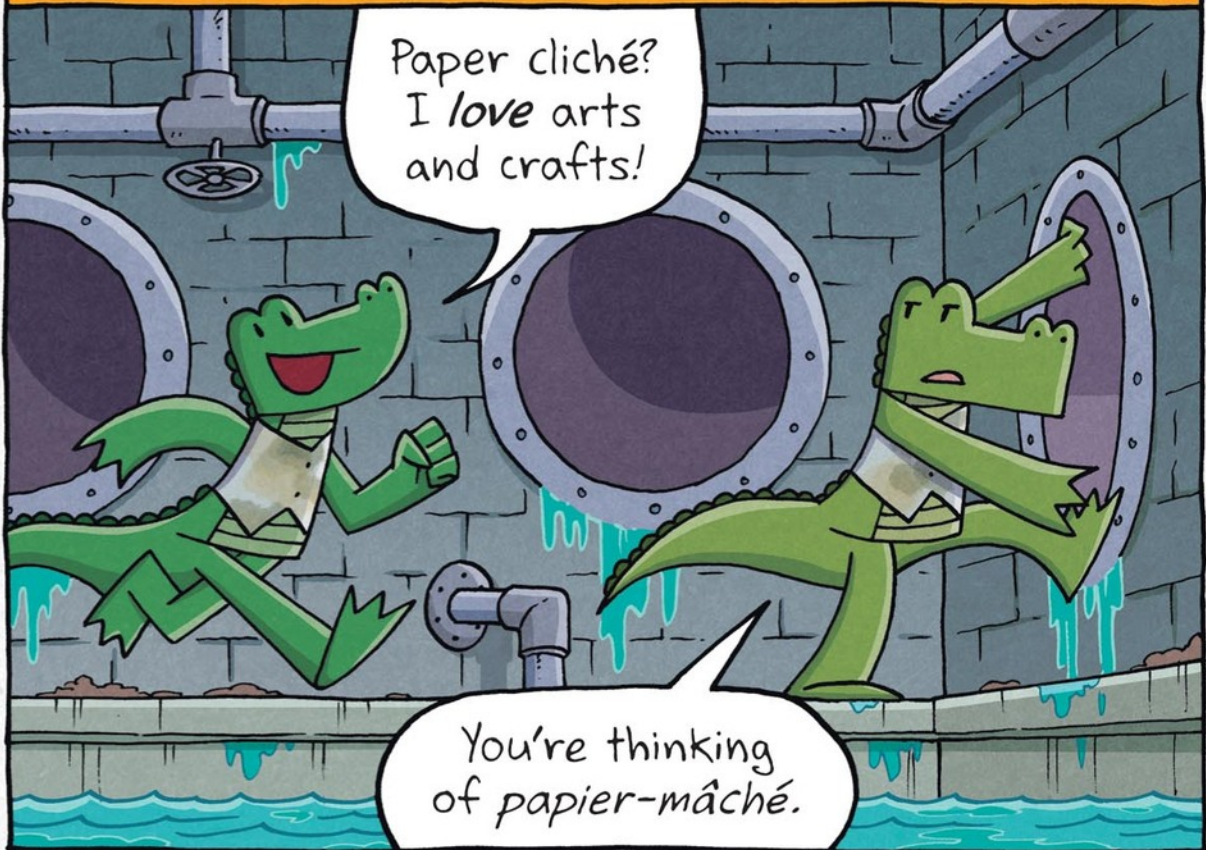
Investigators are in the sewers!



They're not lawbreakers, they're law-doers!



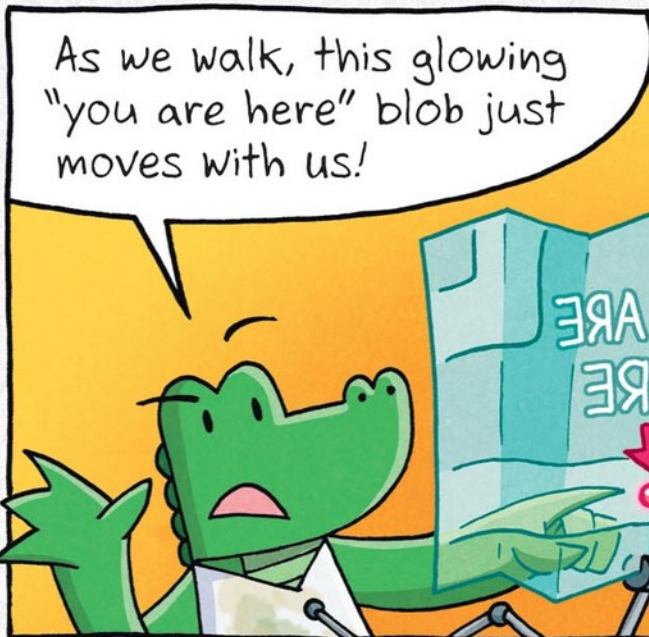
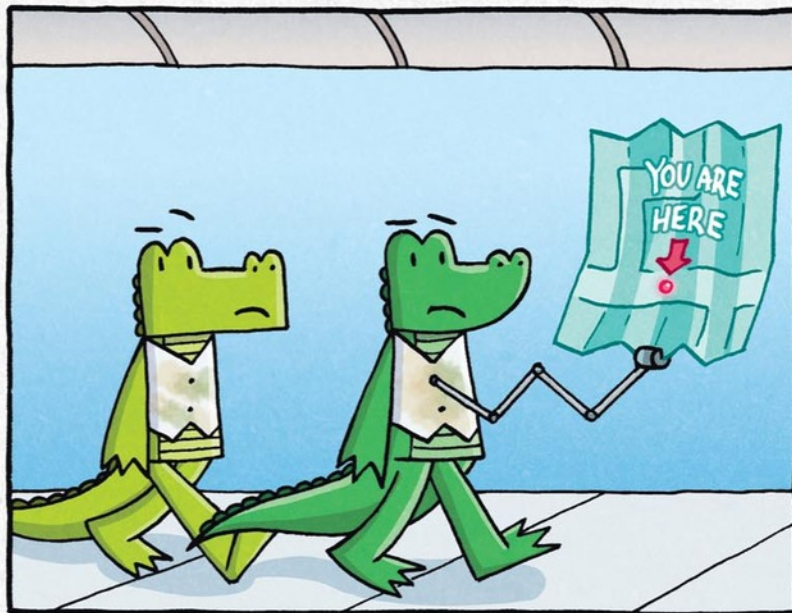
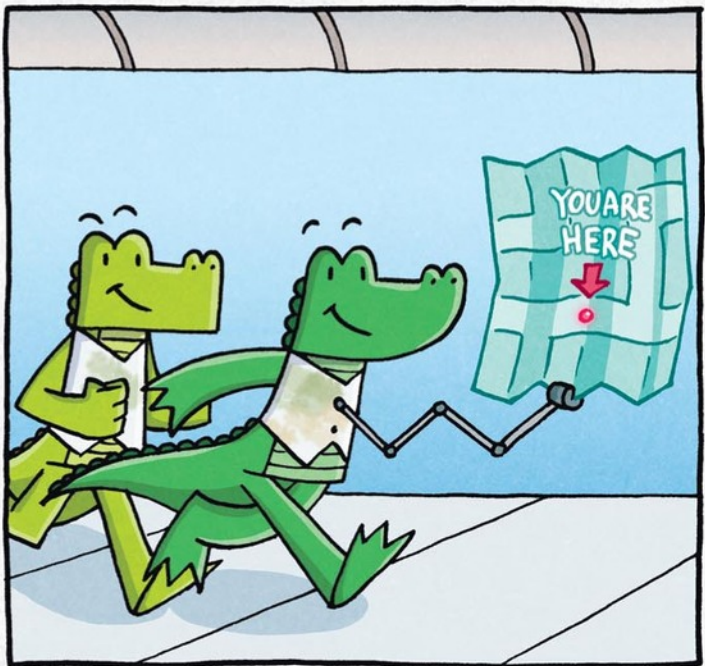
♪♪ Alligators in the sewers might be a cliché... ♪♪

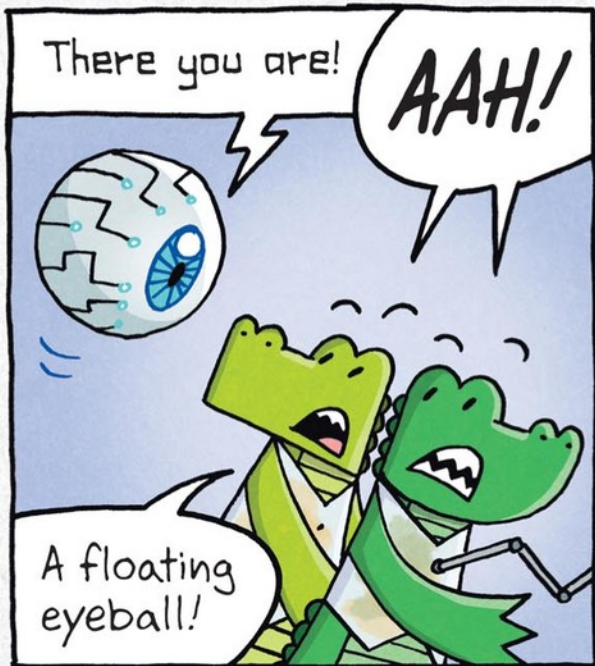


♪ ...but the Investigators are gonna save the day! ♪





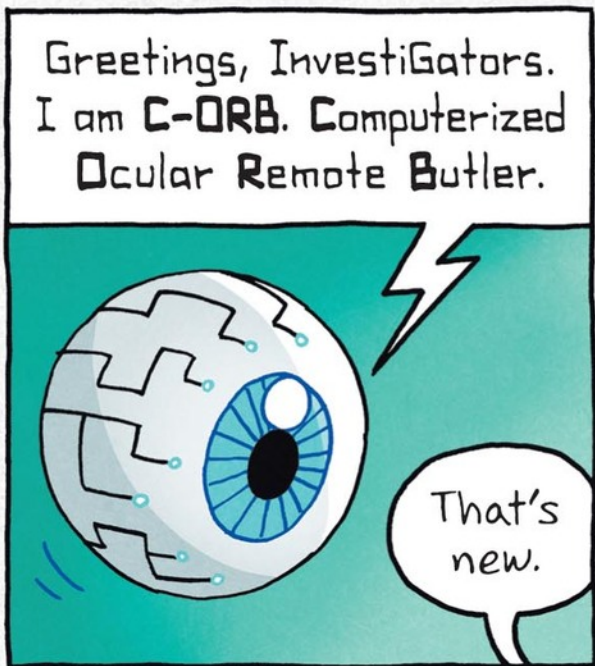




There you are!

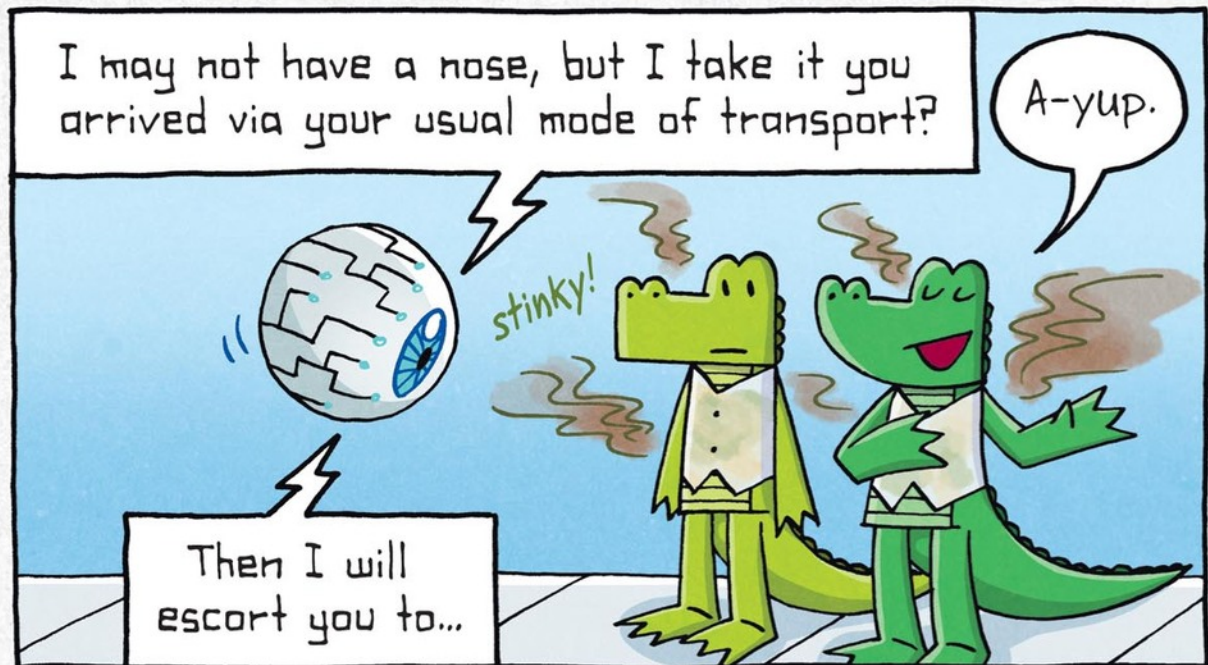
AAH!

A floating eyeball!



Greetings, InvestiGators.
I am C-ORB. Computerized
Ocular Remote Butler.

That's
new.

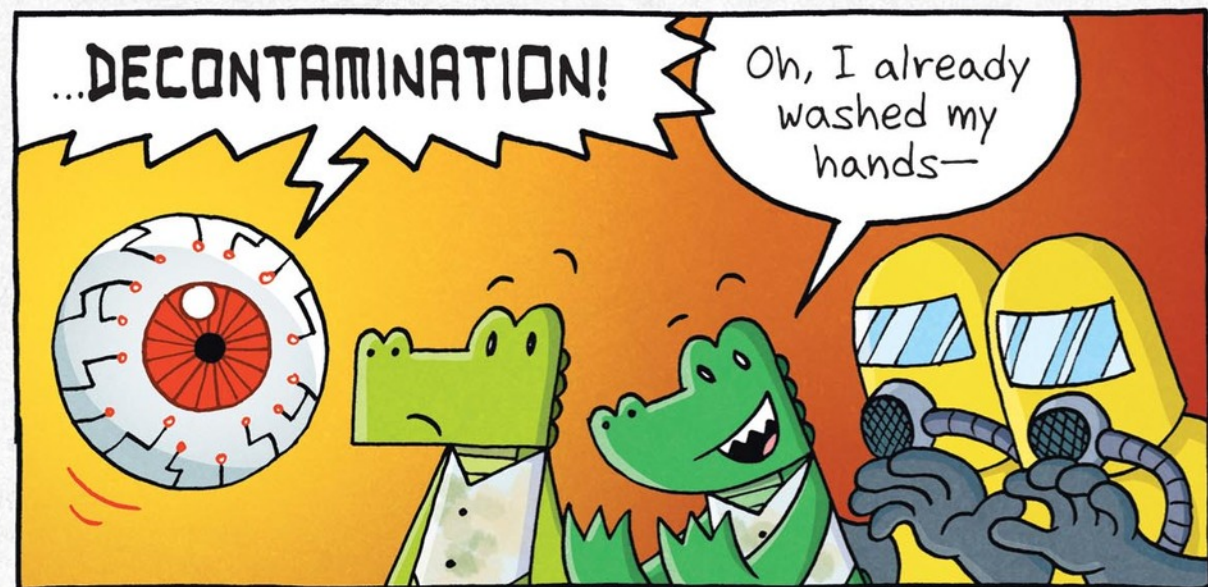


I may not have a nose, but I take it you
arrived via your usual mode of transport?

A-yup.

stinky!

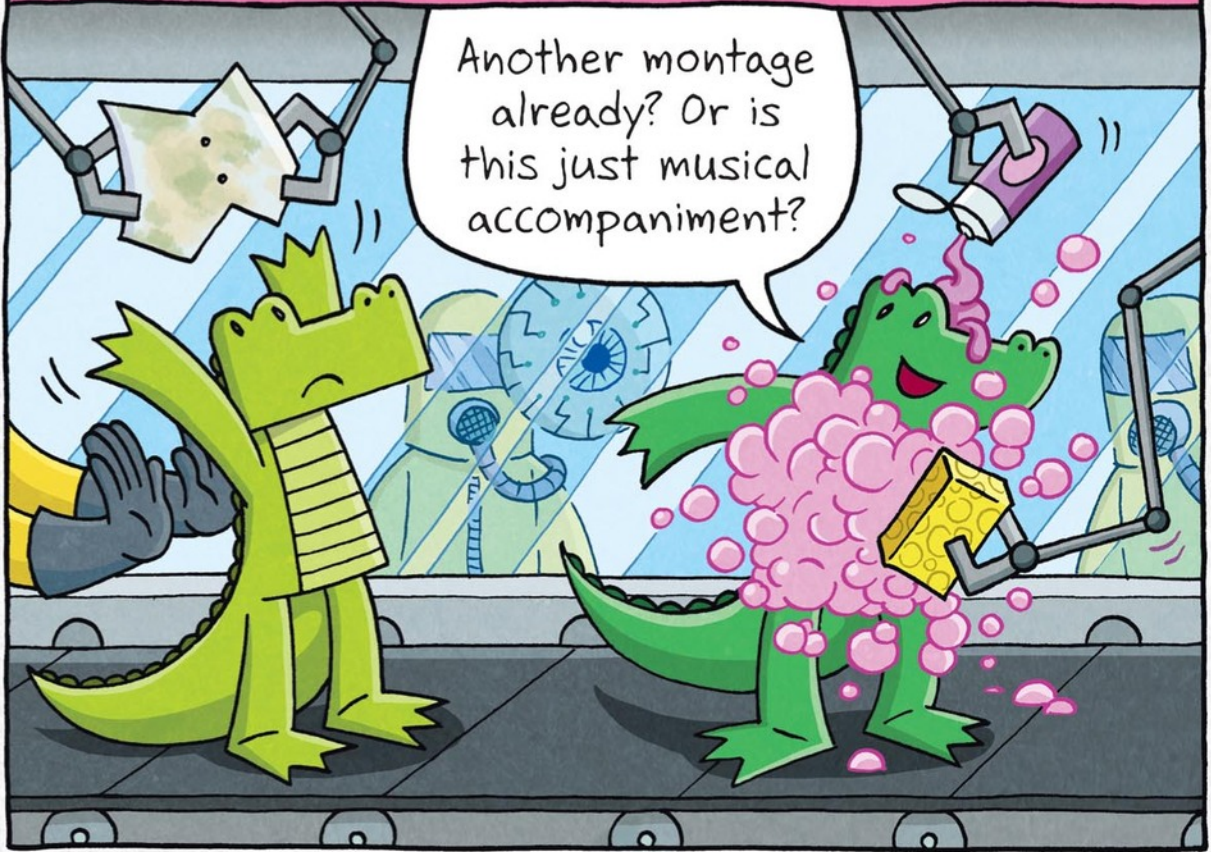
Then I will
escort you to...



...DECONTAMINATION!

Oh, I already
washed my
hands—

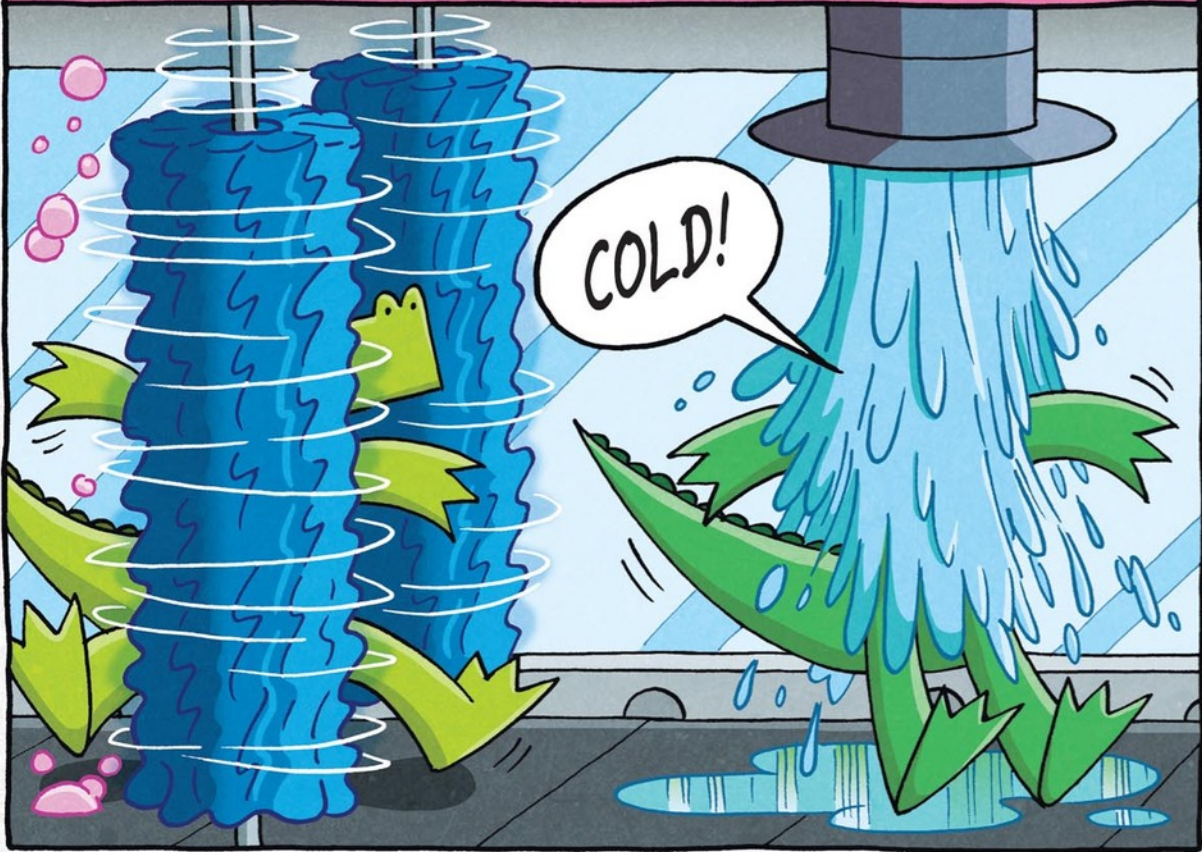
♪ ♪ ♪ Lather, rinse, and repeat! ♪ ♪ ♪



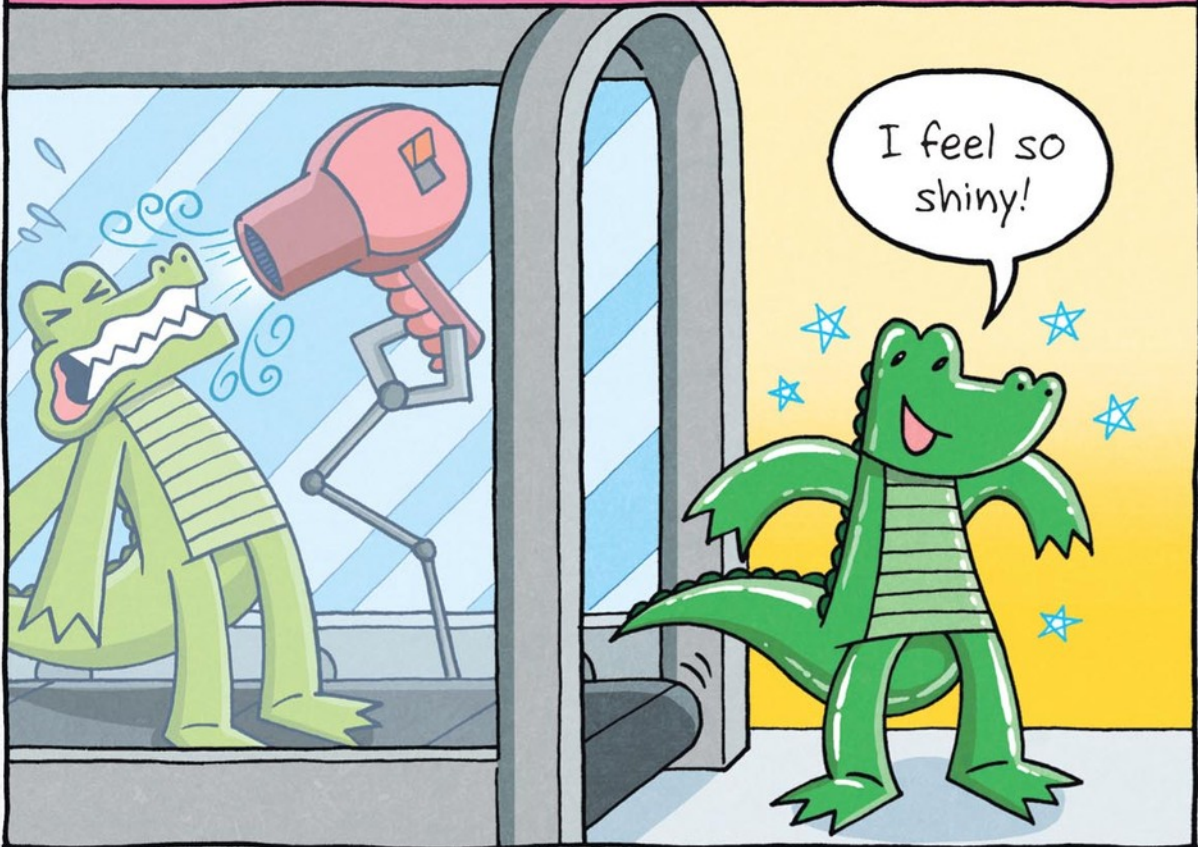
♪ With soap and shampoo, you'll smell so sweet! ♪

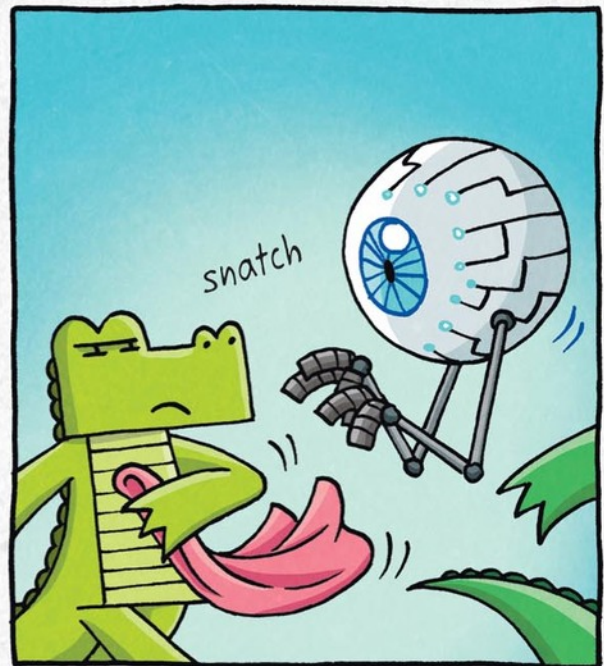


♪♪ This machine will make you squeaky clean! ♪♪

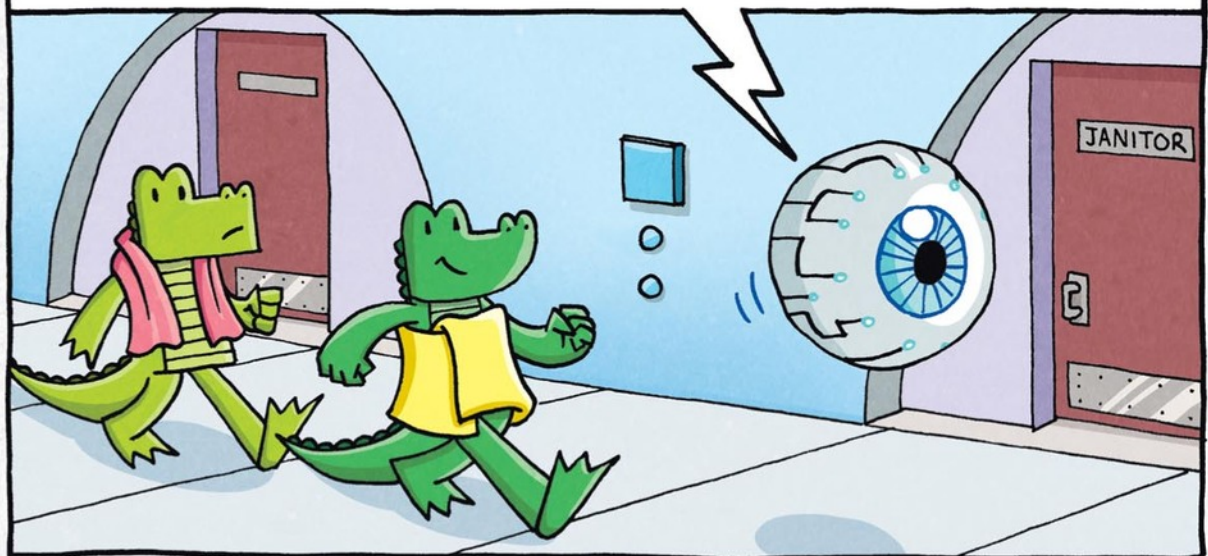


♪♪ Clean on the outside, clean in between! ♪♪

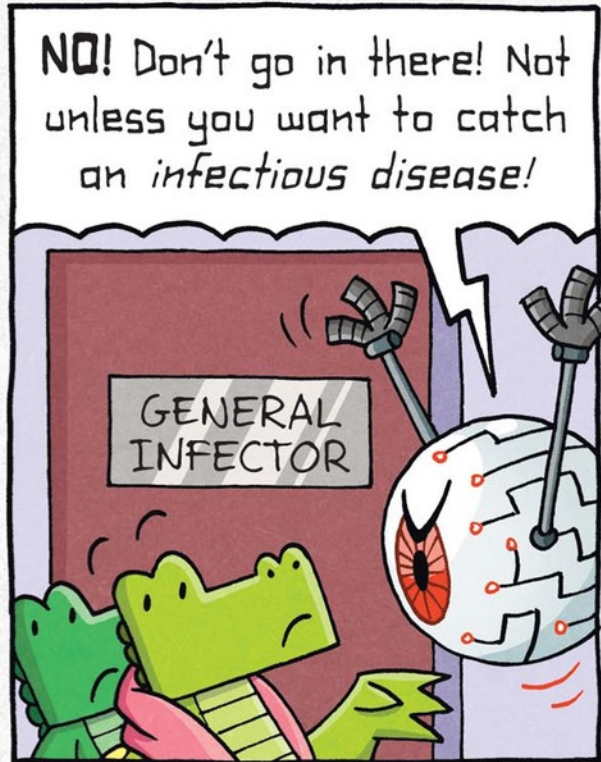


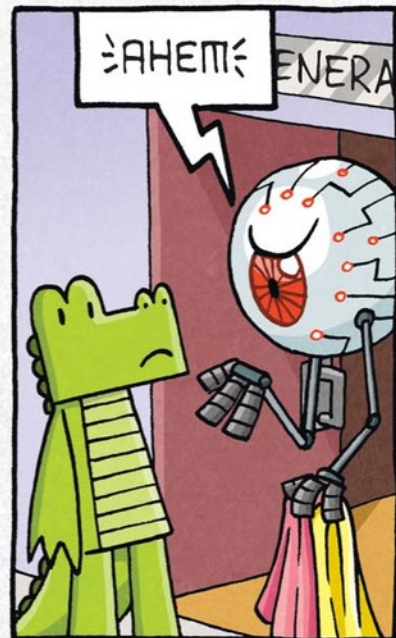
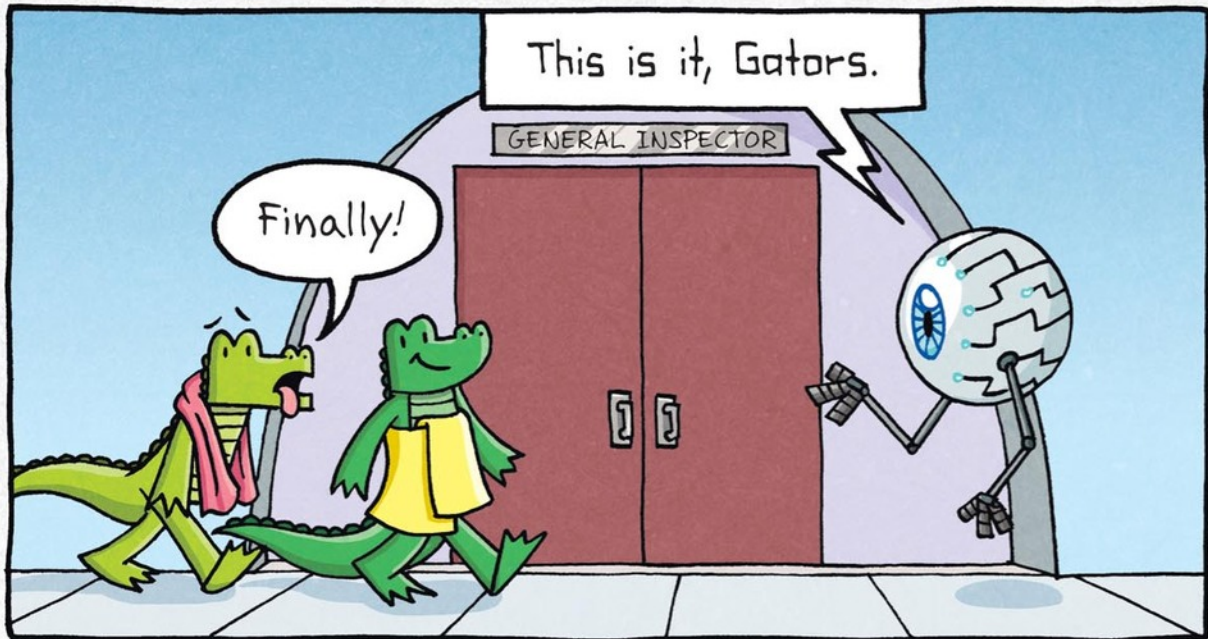


This way, Gators, to the General Inspector's office.









InvestiGators! Thanks for coming so promptly. I know you're in the middle of the Gustavo Mustachio case.



Approximately eighteen pages ago, an explosion rocked the Science Factory down on Electric Avenue!



GOOD GOLLY, Eighteen pages! Has it really been that long?



Anyway! You're our agents nearest that location... Or, you *were*, before I ordered you to come here... But you will be **AGAIN**, once you get back there!



There's little to go on, but I have a hunch this explosion and your current investigation may be connected.



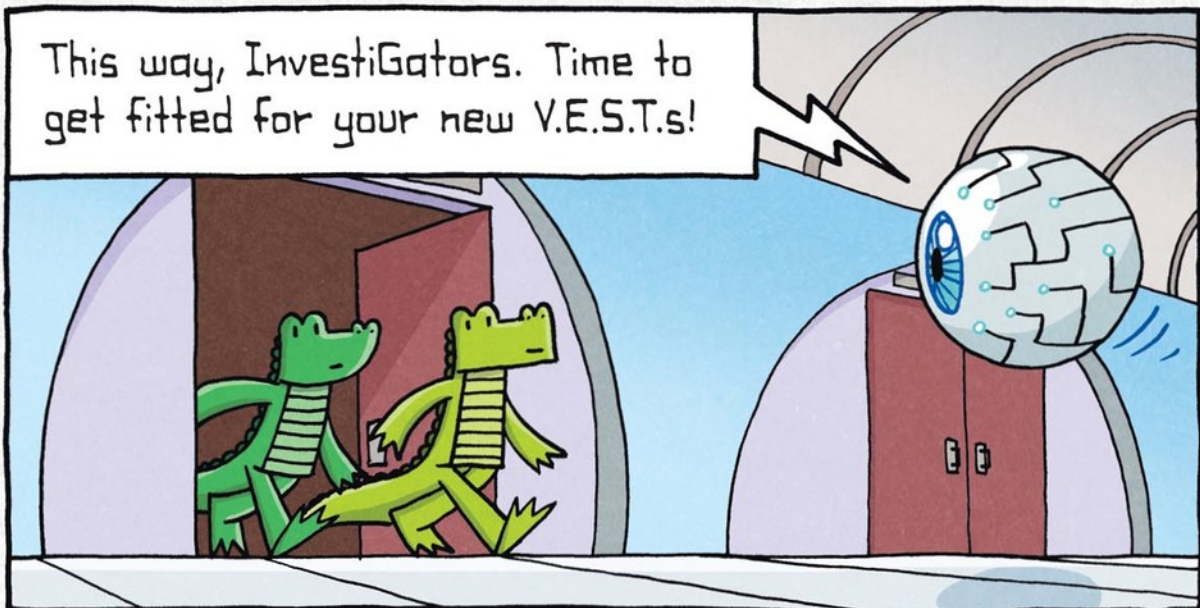
I'm sorry, HUNCH. I said "lunch" when I meant "hunch." I'm feeling a bit peckish.



But enough about me. Mango, Brash—it's time to SUIT up and not let S.U.I.T. down!



This way, InvestiGators. Time to get fitted for your new V.E.S.T.s!





Hey, why does Inspector VAGUE get two offices?

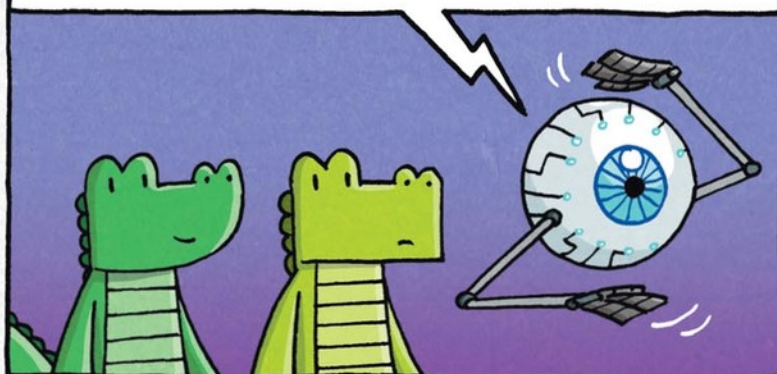


That's Inspector **VOGUE**. They handle striking poses and all manner of dance.



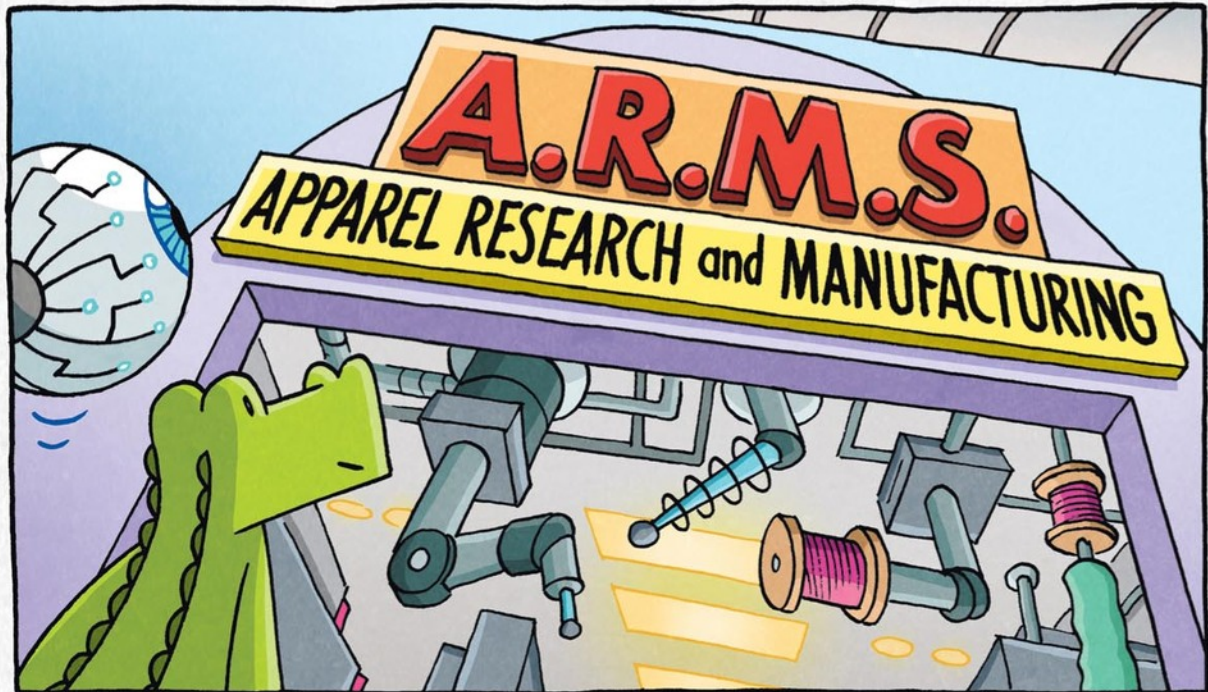
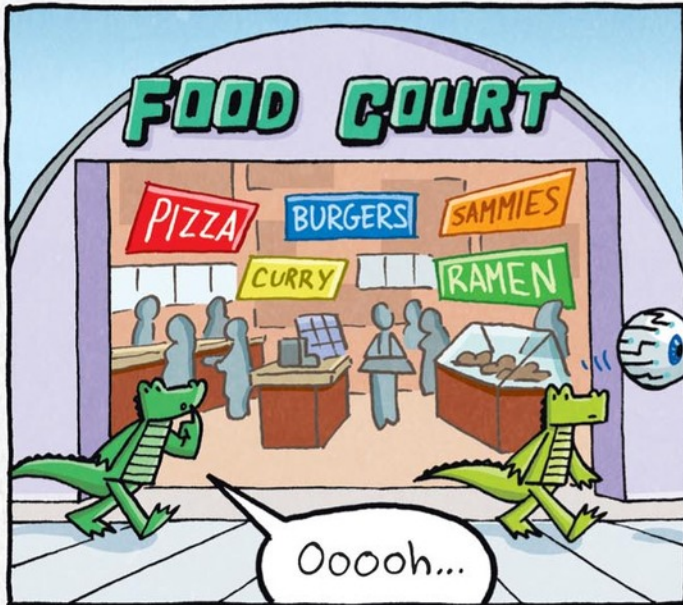
Okay, VAGUE, VOGUE—that's a bit of a stretch.

Indeed! It takes a lot of stretching to be limber enough for all those fancy dance moves.

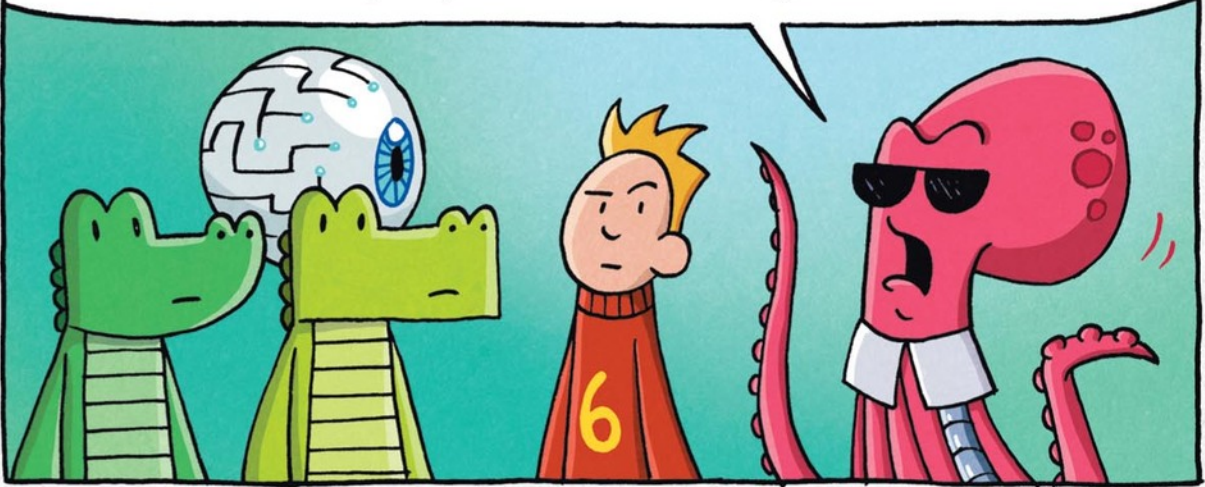


Keep up, Gators!

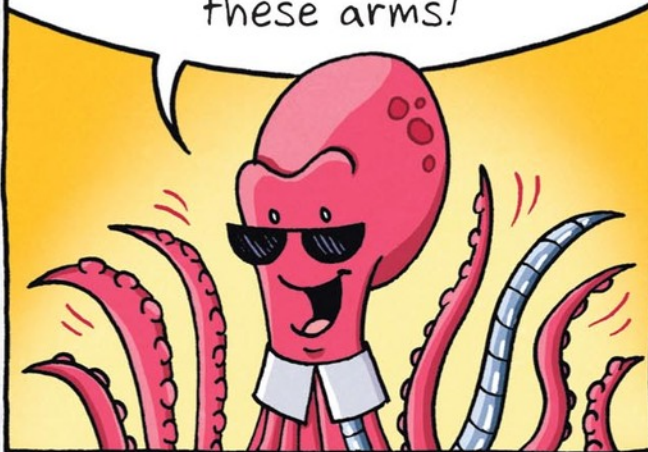




NO! No, no. *NOT* six. The S is for **SVEN!**
I am Sven Septapus, lead designer of A.R.M.S.



I also have the **MOST** arms.
Look at them. Look at all
these arms!



Agent Six.
Agent Sven.



OH! I have a **JOKE!**

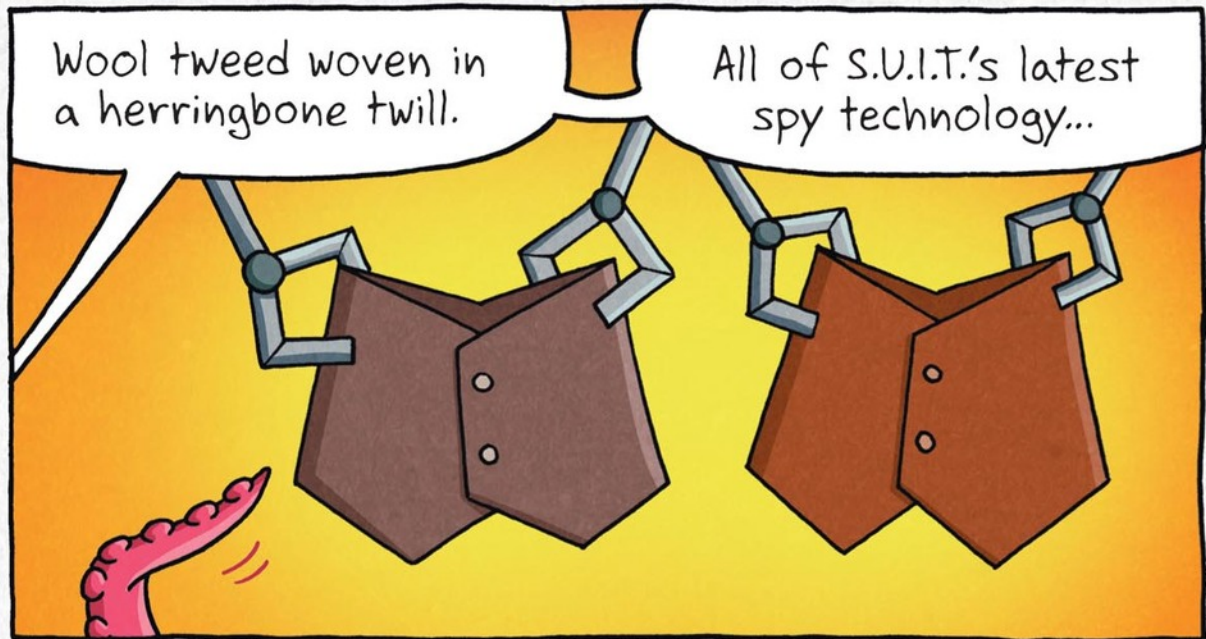
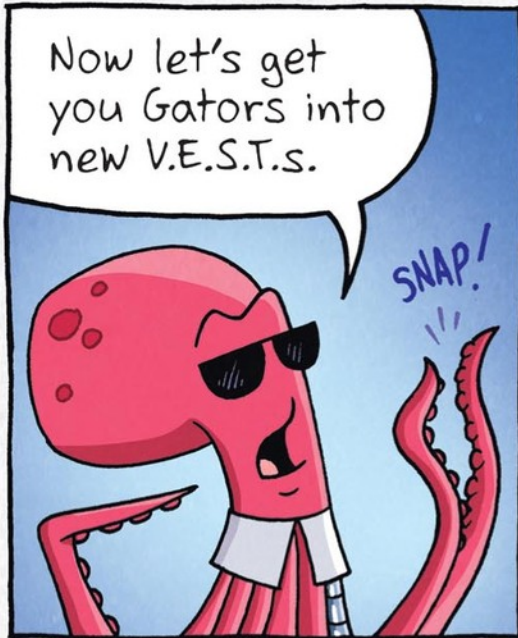
Oh no.

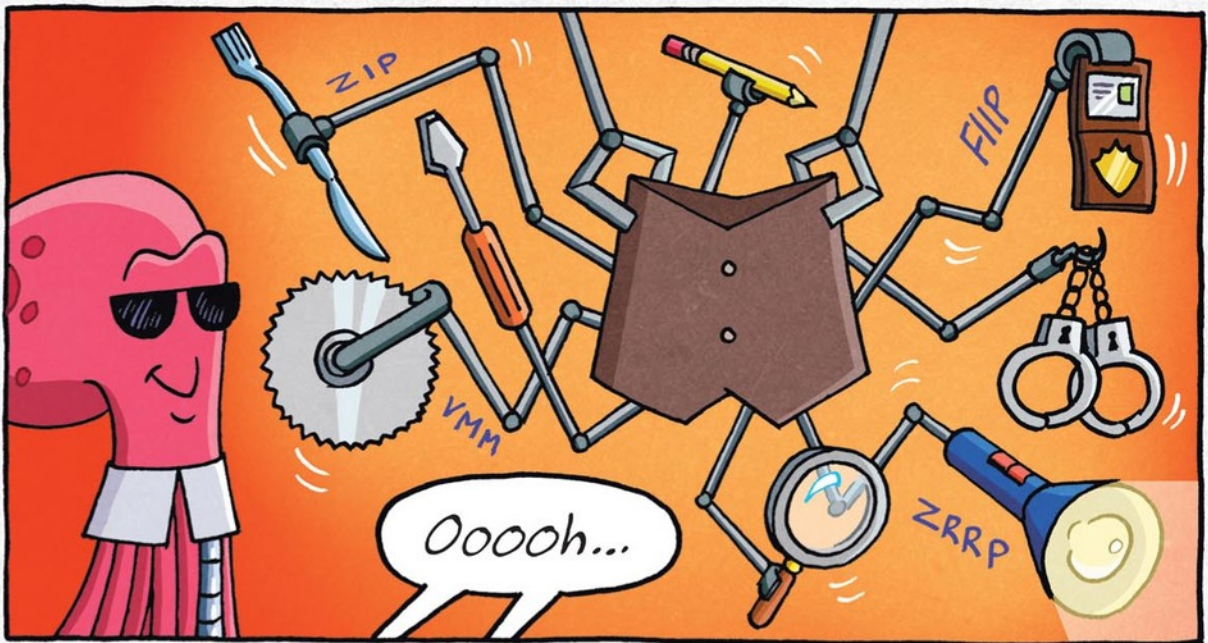
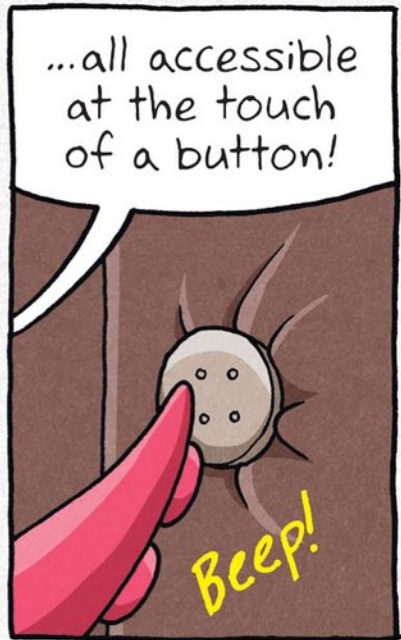
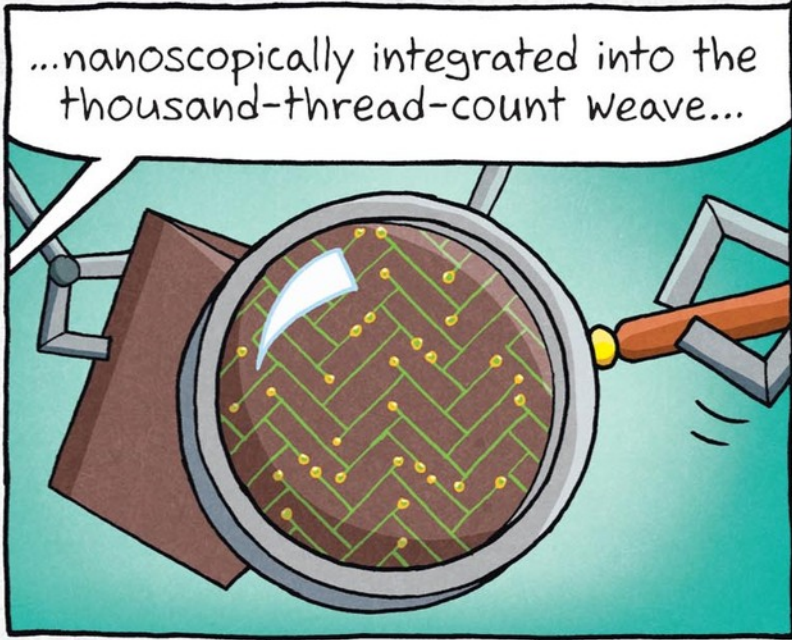


WHY WAS SIX AFRAID
OF SVEN?

Because—







Peanut butter and peanut butter?

No, peanut butter and pickle and bacon.

What about the V.E.S.T.s?!

Gulp!

Does it come in **blue**? Blue would really bring out the color in my eyes.

Mango, your eyes are just two little black dots like mine!

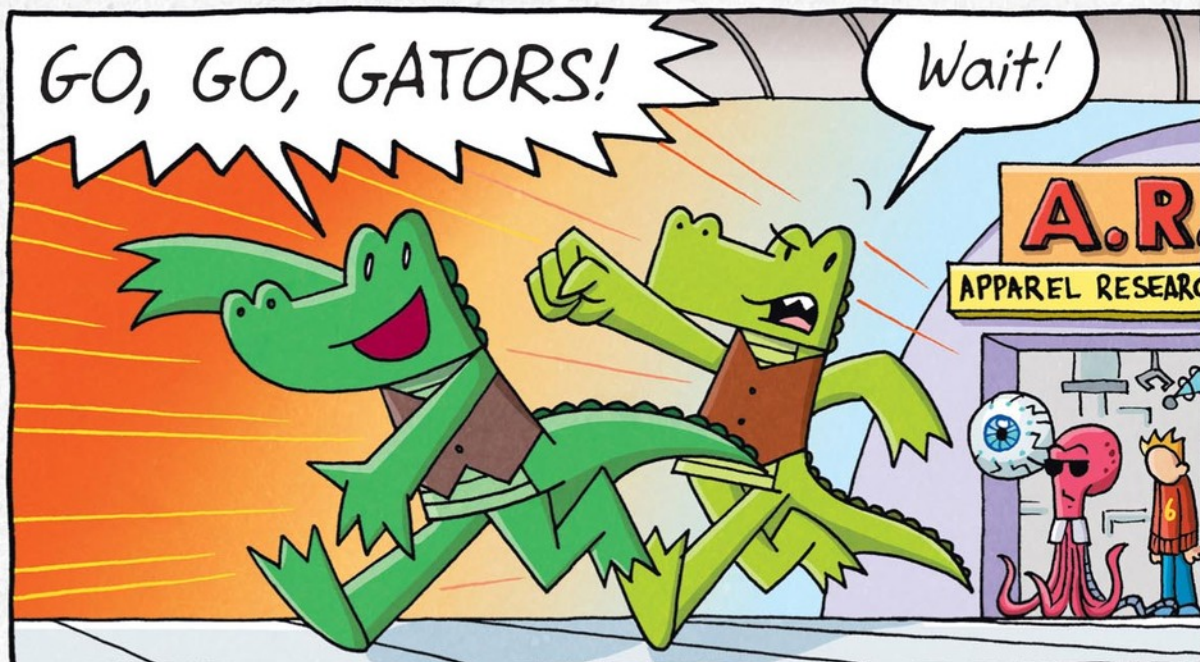
Mine too. I blame the artist for being **LAZY**.

?!

RUB RUB RUB

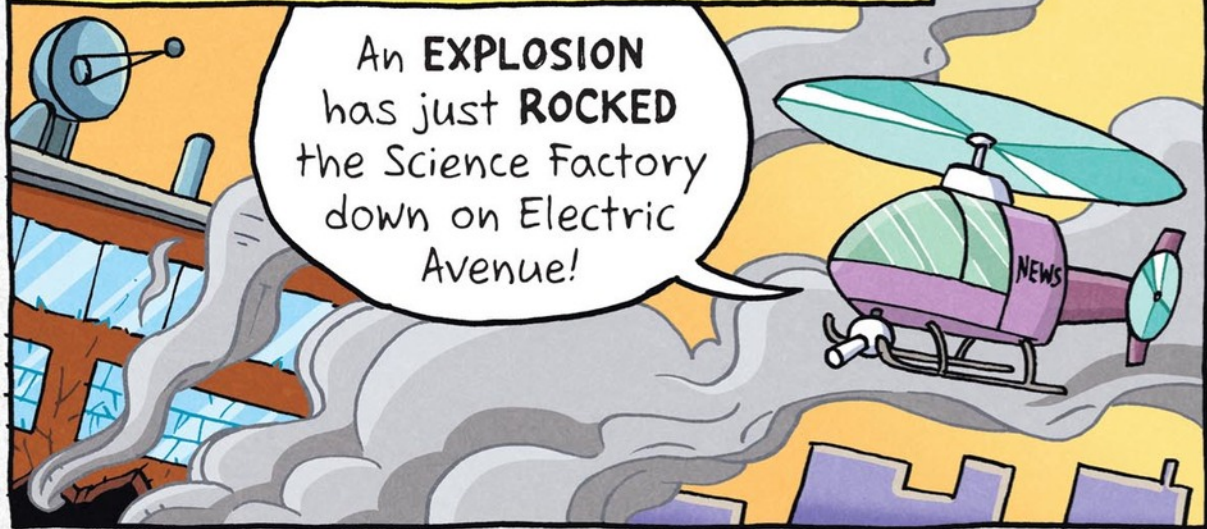
MMMPH!!!

AAH!



Chapter 7

Just then, about twenty-six pages ago...



An **EXPLOSION** has just **ROCKED** the Science Factory down on Electric Avenue!

Did an experiment go wrong? It's hard to see what's happening through all the smoke...

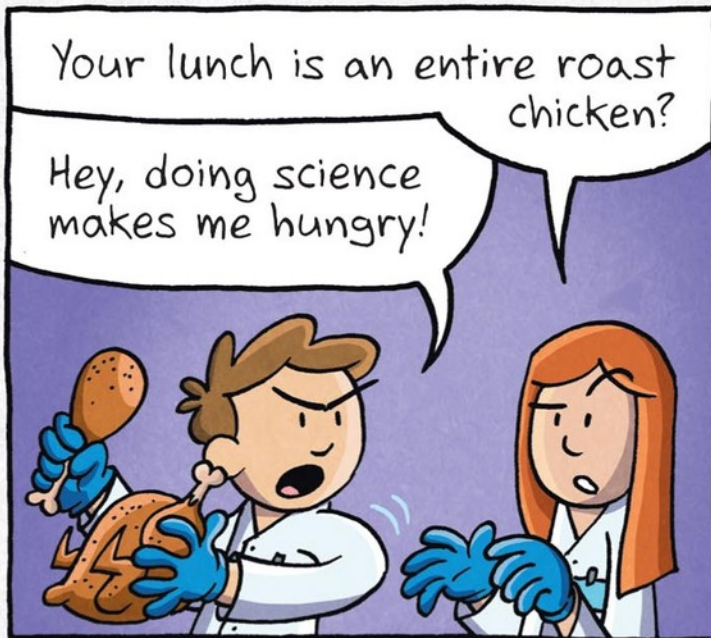
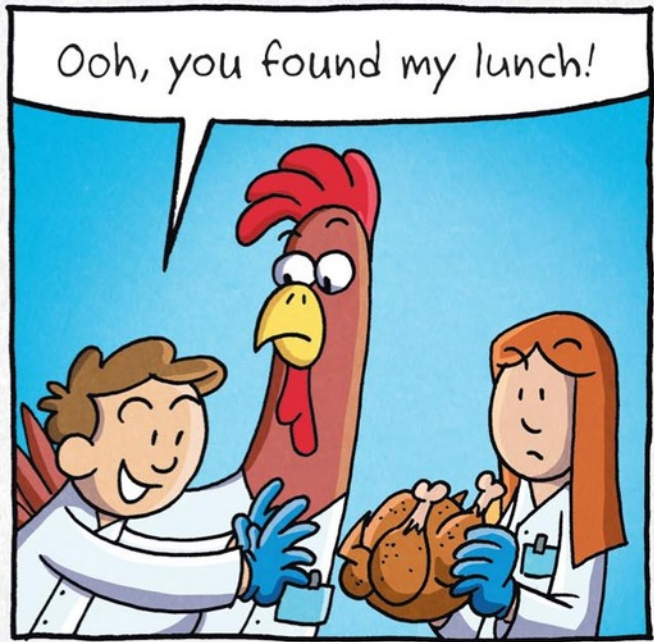


≠Cough! Cough!≠
Is everyone all right?



Dr. Doodledoo!
N0000000!!







Over here!

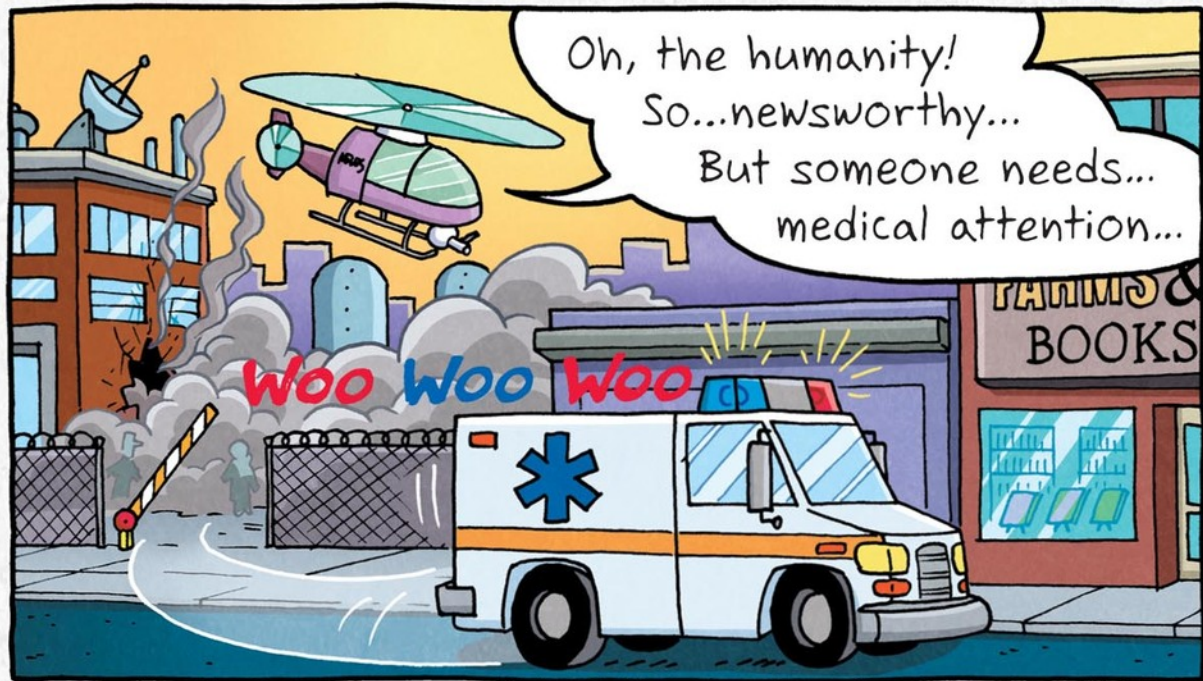


This Head Scientist has a HEAD INJURY!

oog...



This man needs a brain surgeon! **STAT!**



Oh, the humanity!
So...newsworthy...
But someone needs...
medical attention...

Woo Woo Woo





Ugh! Being DOCTOR COPTER is both a blessing and a curse!



Hey! The bathroom is for customers only!



Wow! What a catastrophe!



HALT! There's been a science accident!



We're InvestiGators.

Badges?



We're not badgers, we're alligators!

bip



zip zip flip



Okay, checks out.



Did you notice anything unusual before the explosion?

There's *always* something unusual going on at this place, but let me think...

We were in the middle of a **Code Sunburn**, so everyone was outside. A guy delivered a giant birthday cake for Bob, which I wheeled inside. Then I ran into one angry scientist, who was on his phone—it said something about a

jamboree on the screen. Don't think I've seen him since, but it can be hard to tell these scientists apart. Well, except for the chicken.



Oh, and the only **serious** injury seemed to be to the Head Scientist, who was just taken away in an ambulance.

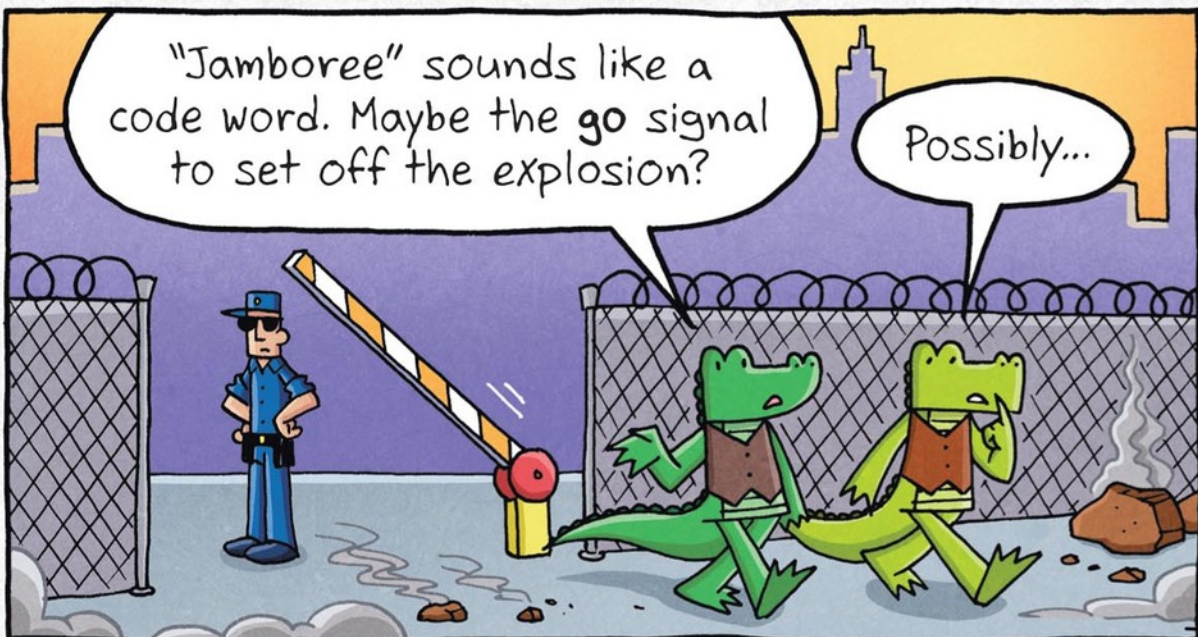


Thanks, security dude. Keep up the good work.

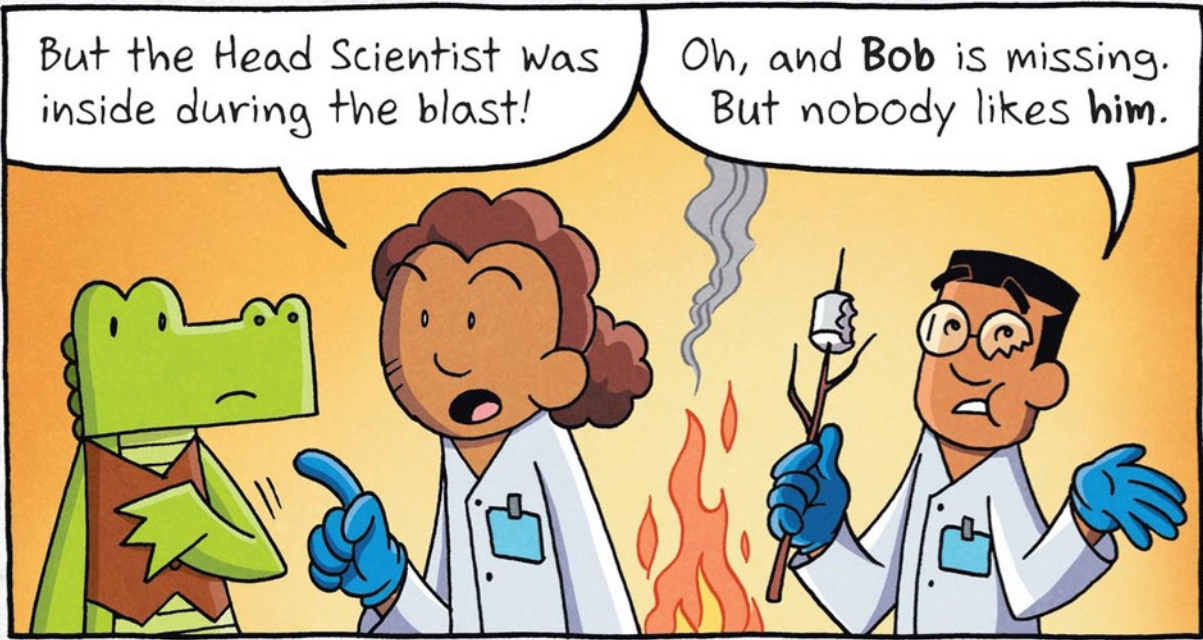


"Jamboree" sounds like a code word. Maybe the **go** signal to set off the explosion?

Possibly...







But the Head Scientist was inside during the blast!

Oh, and **Bob** is missing. But nobody likes him.



Bob is a scientist?

Feh! Not a **GOOD** one!



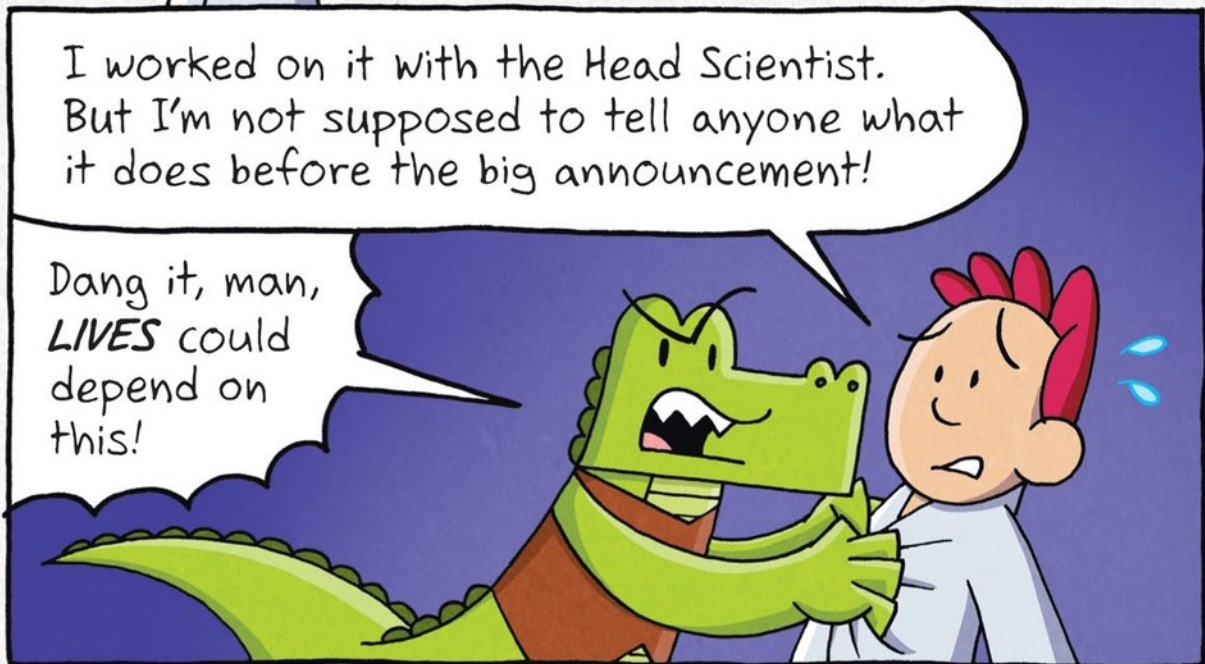
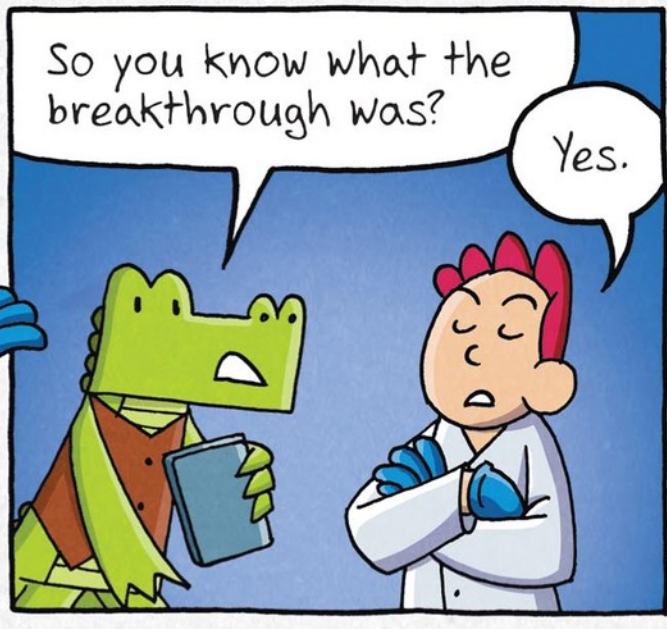
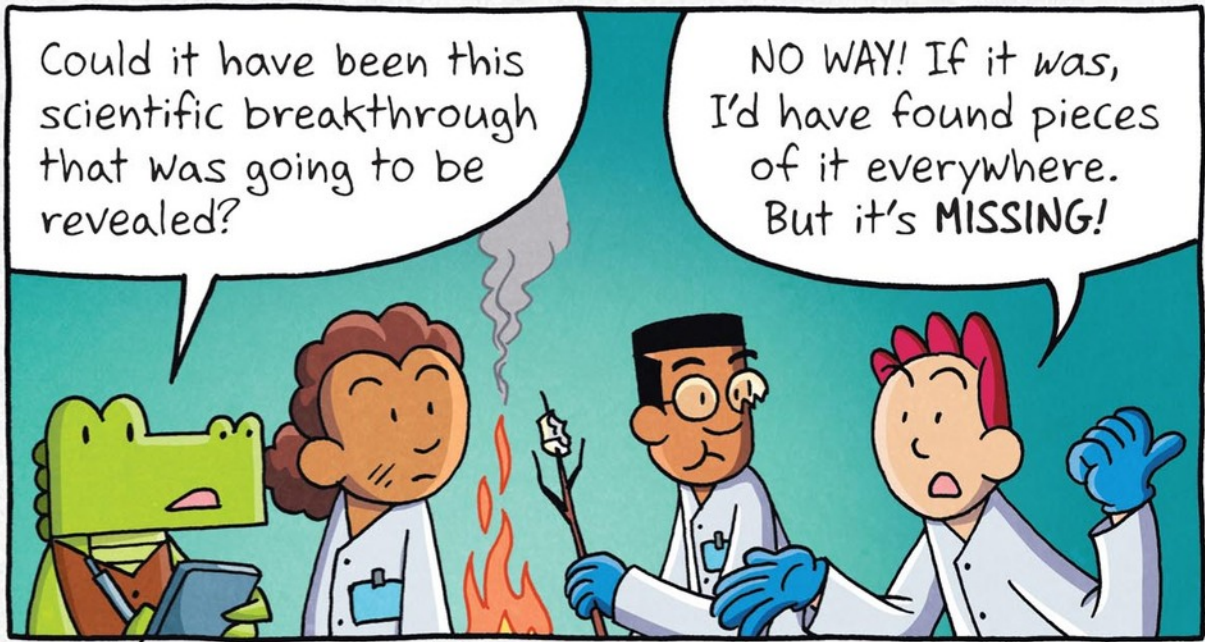
He's only been here, like, a week, and already no one can tolerate him.



Mm-hmm. Does anyone know what caused the explosion?

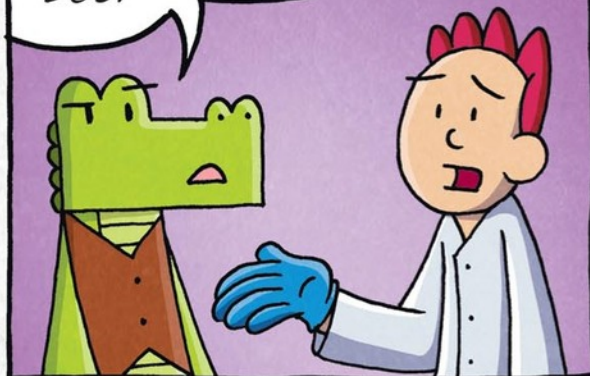


No. We have experiments blow up here all the time, but nothing like this! It was all, **KABLOOEY!!**



Okay, okay! It's called...
THE THINGAMABOB.

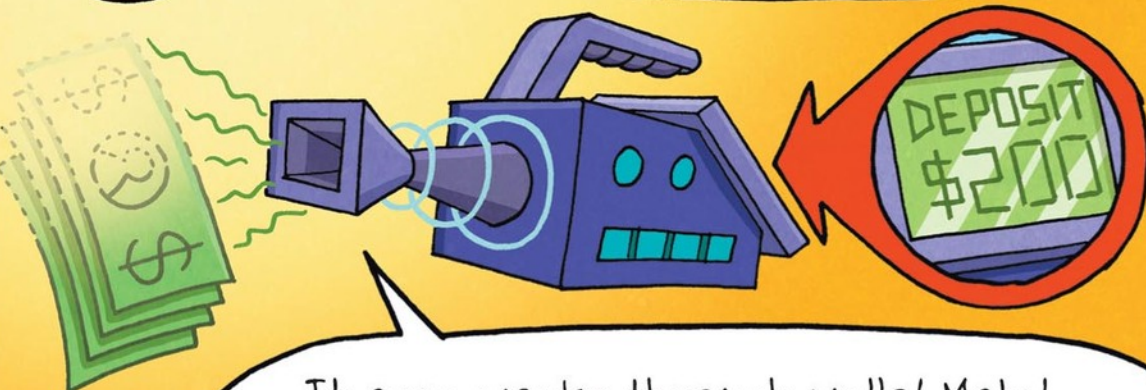
As in *Scientist Bob*?



No, wait! We changed it.
It's now called...THE
THINGAMASTEVE.



It's a laser beam that digitizes
actual money. It erases the *physical*
cash from existence, but puts its
value inside a computer!



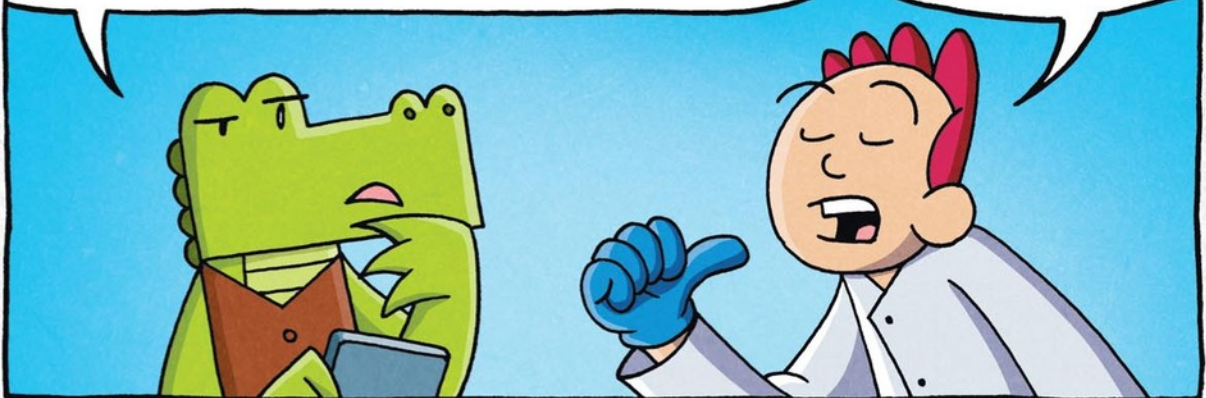
It even works through walls! Metal,
brick, wood, straw—*whatever!* Just point
it wherever there's money and it's *yours!*

It basically transfers money
from the real world into any
bank account you want—
preferably a high-interest
savings account.



Why is it called the THINGAMASTEVE? Why not something like...the REVERSE ATM? Or...the DEPOSITRON? Or CASH GRAB?

Hey, we're scientists, not writers.

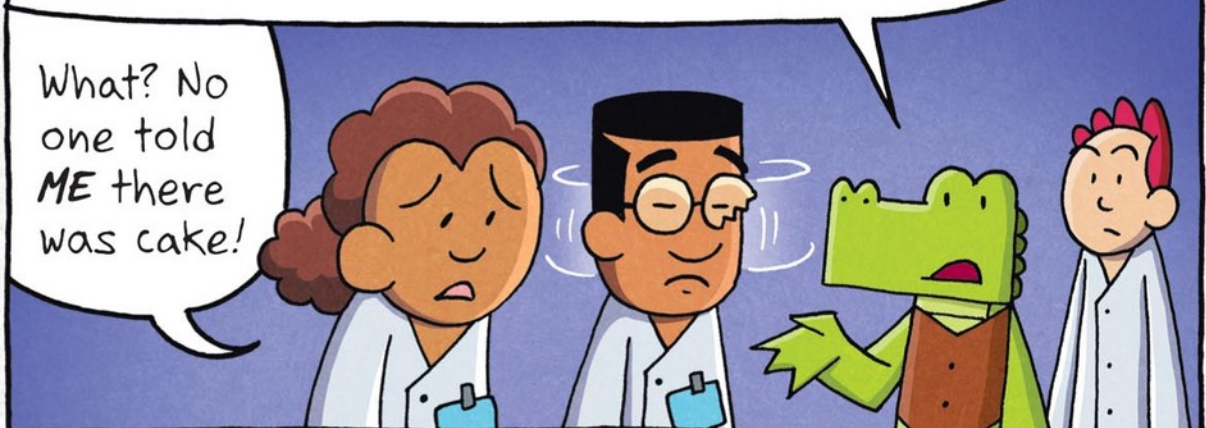


Well, I can see why you'd want to keep such a powerful tool safe. Pretty odd that you were going to **ANNOUNCE IT TO THE WORLD ON THE NEWS!**



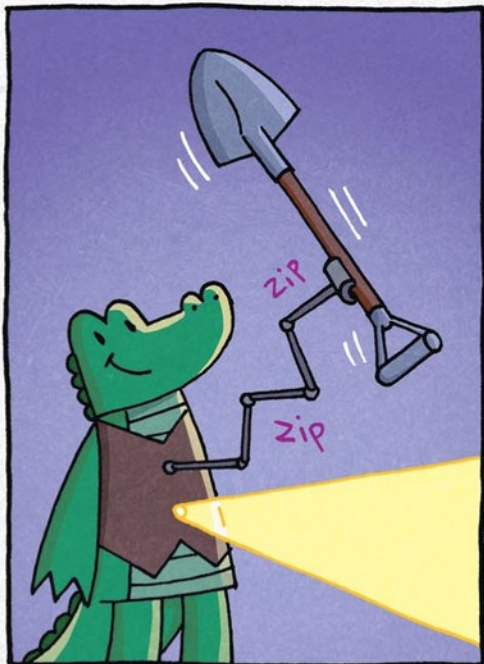
AAAANYWAY... You said you haven't seen Bob since the explosion. Could **he** have taken the device? Did anyone have any of his birthday cake?

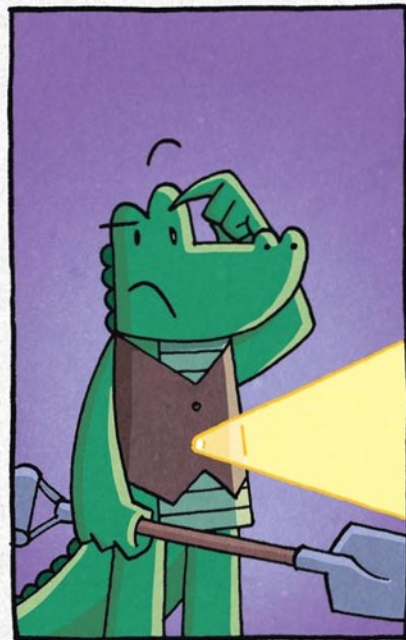
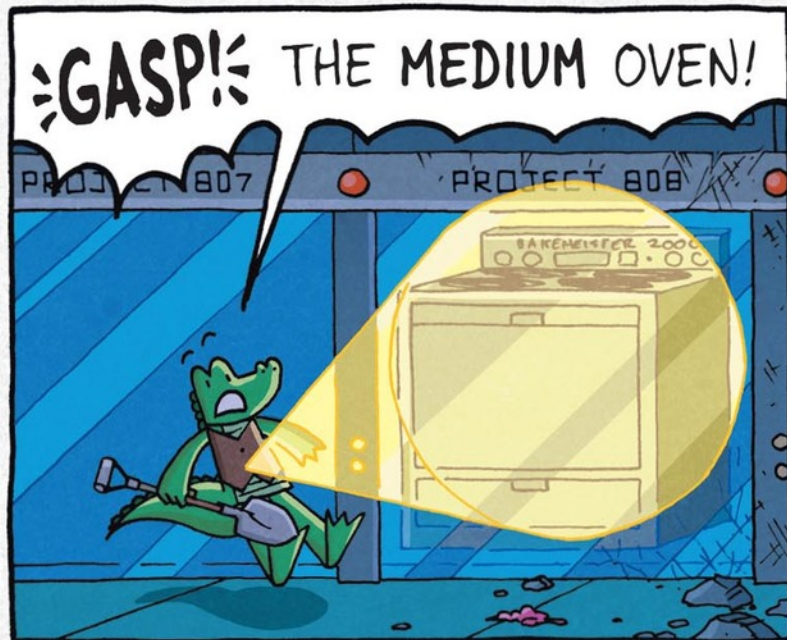
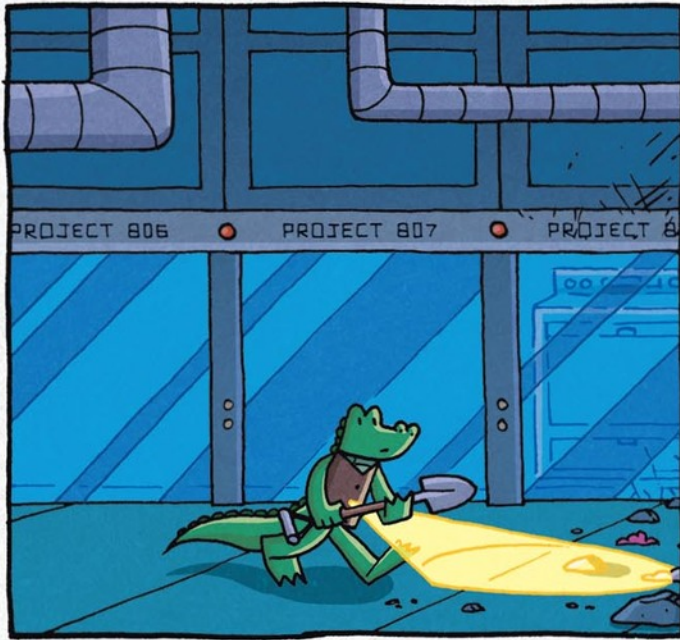
What? No one told **ME** there was cake!

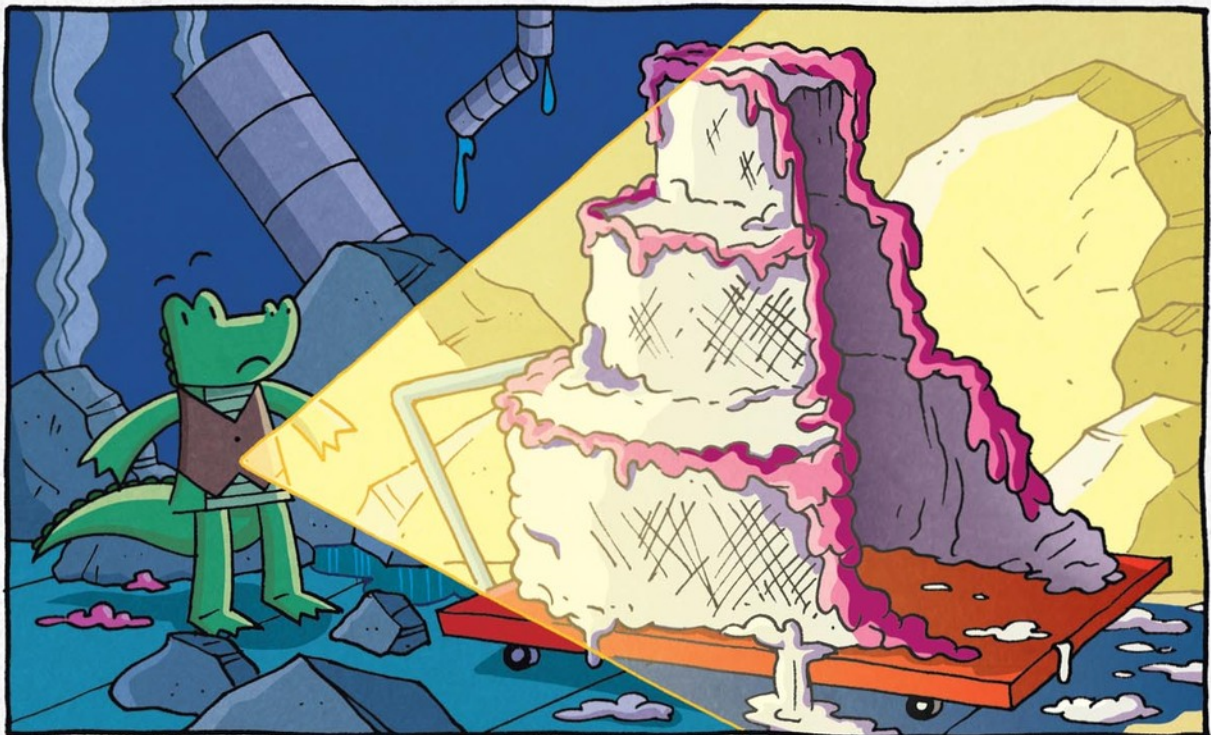
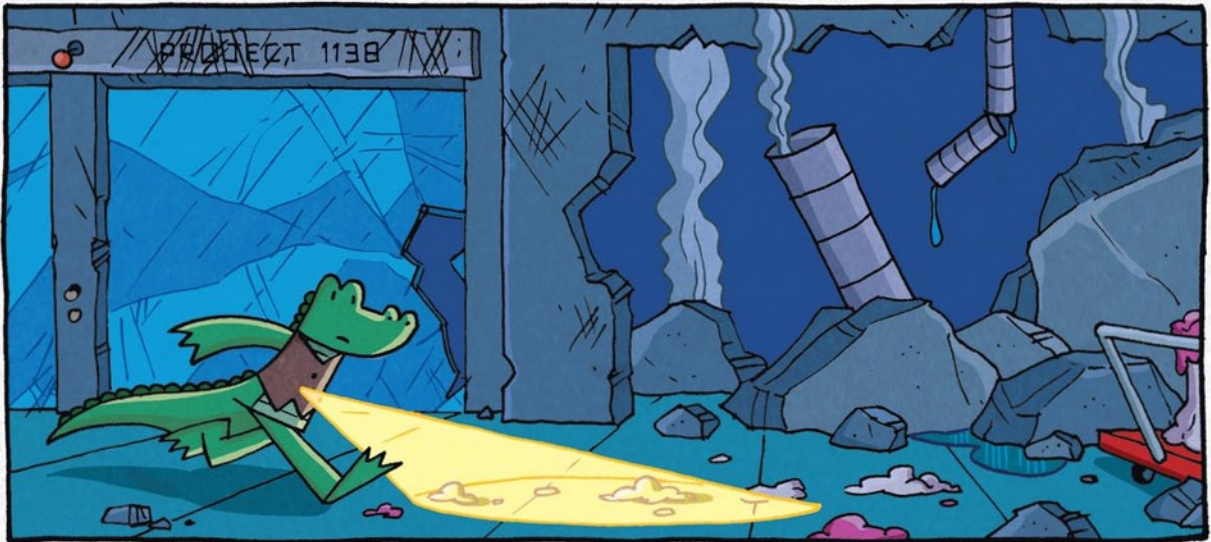




Inside the factory...

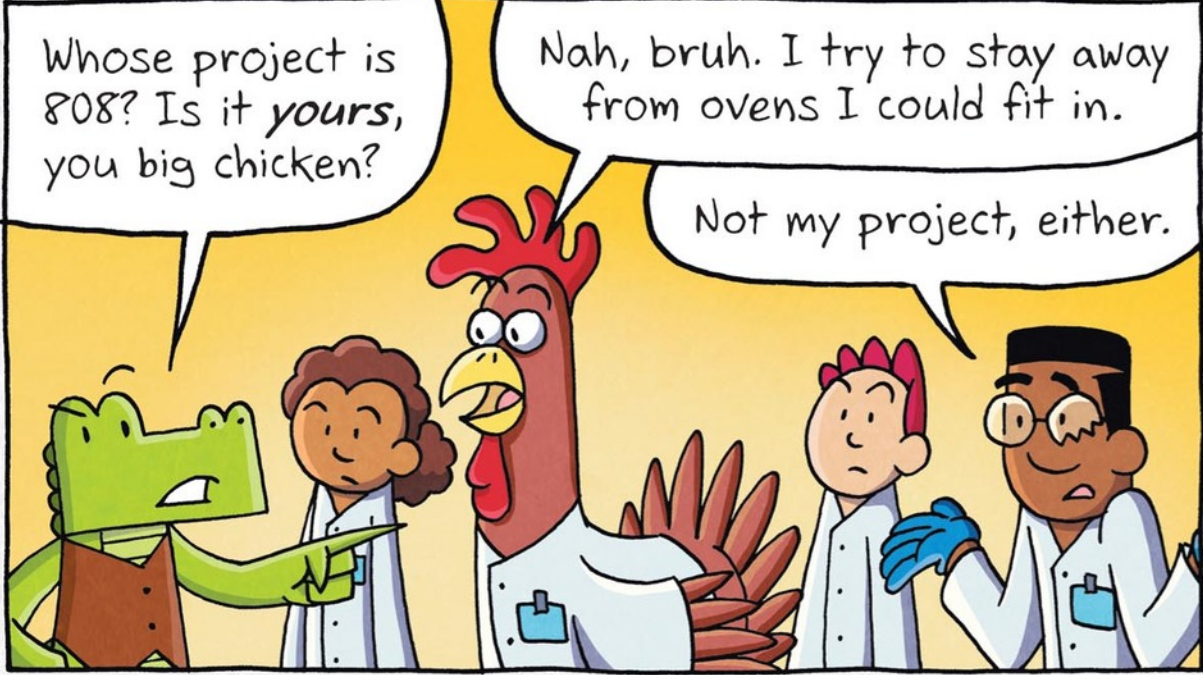
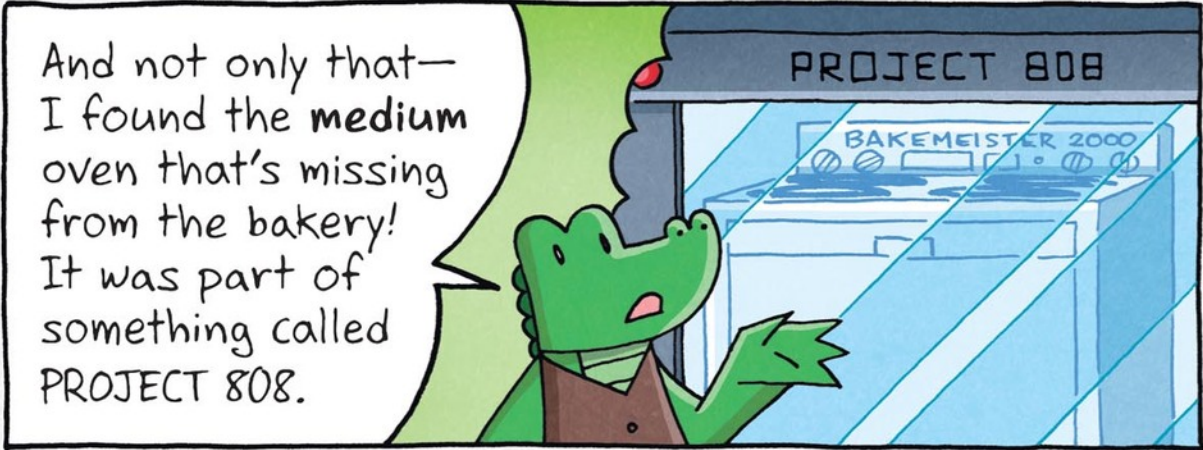


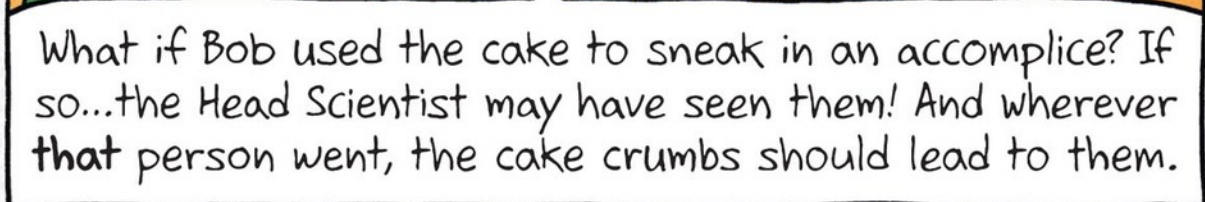
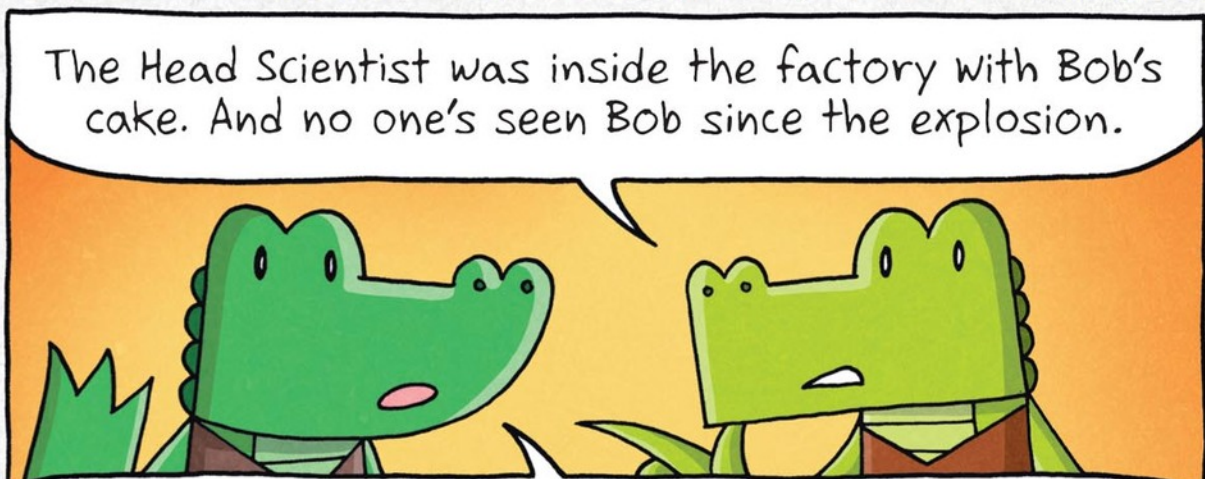
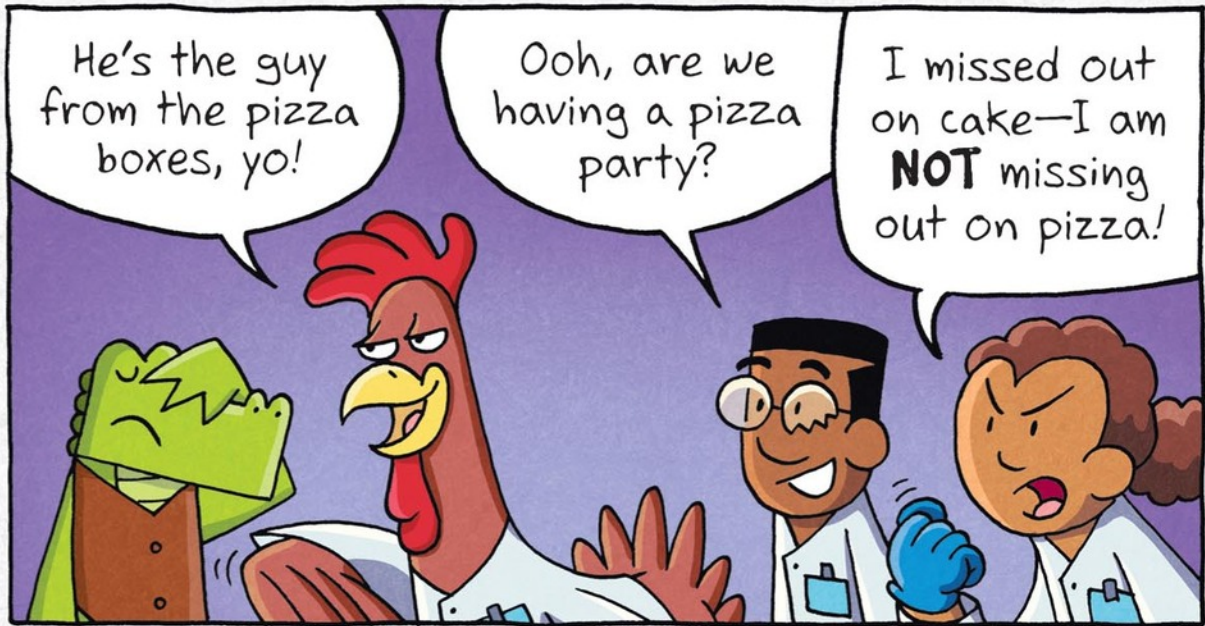




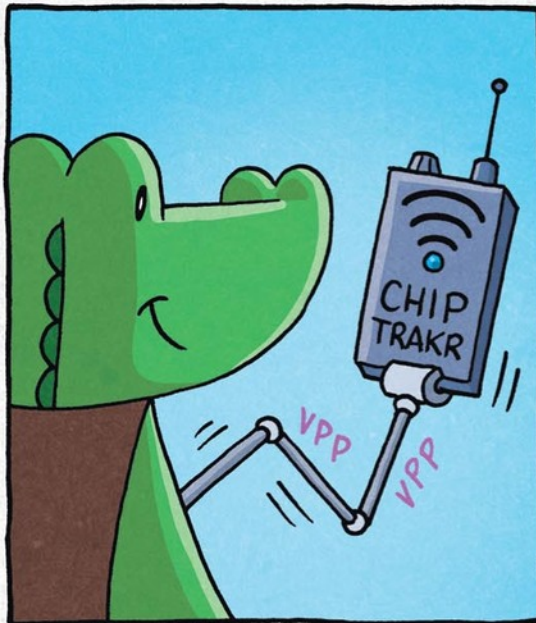
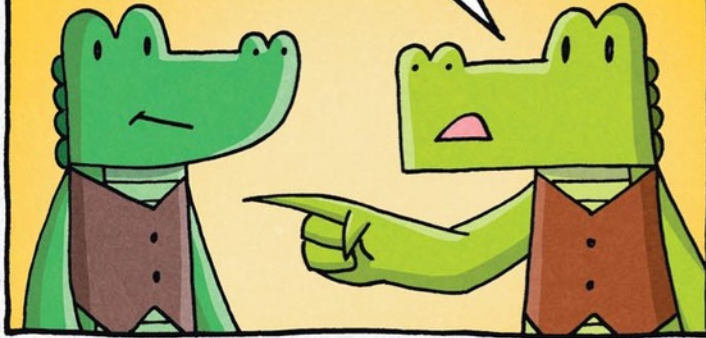








Mango, I'm going to talk to the Head Scientist at the hospital. You follow the trail of cake crumbs.



It's a good thing we baked chocolate microchips into the cake. I can track them with my V.E.S.T.!





Down below...

You have everything you need to rebake me, Gustavo. This next batch better be *perfect*.



I long to be **WHOLE** again.



Y-yes! That's why I used **WHOLE WHEAT FLOUR** this time.



Hmm...
spongy...
durable...



...the crack
is nice and
moist...



Yes... That's a
lovely bake.

Your **SUPER DOUGH** is ready, Chef Mustachio.



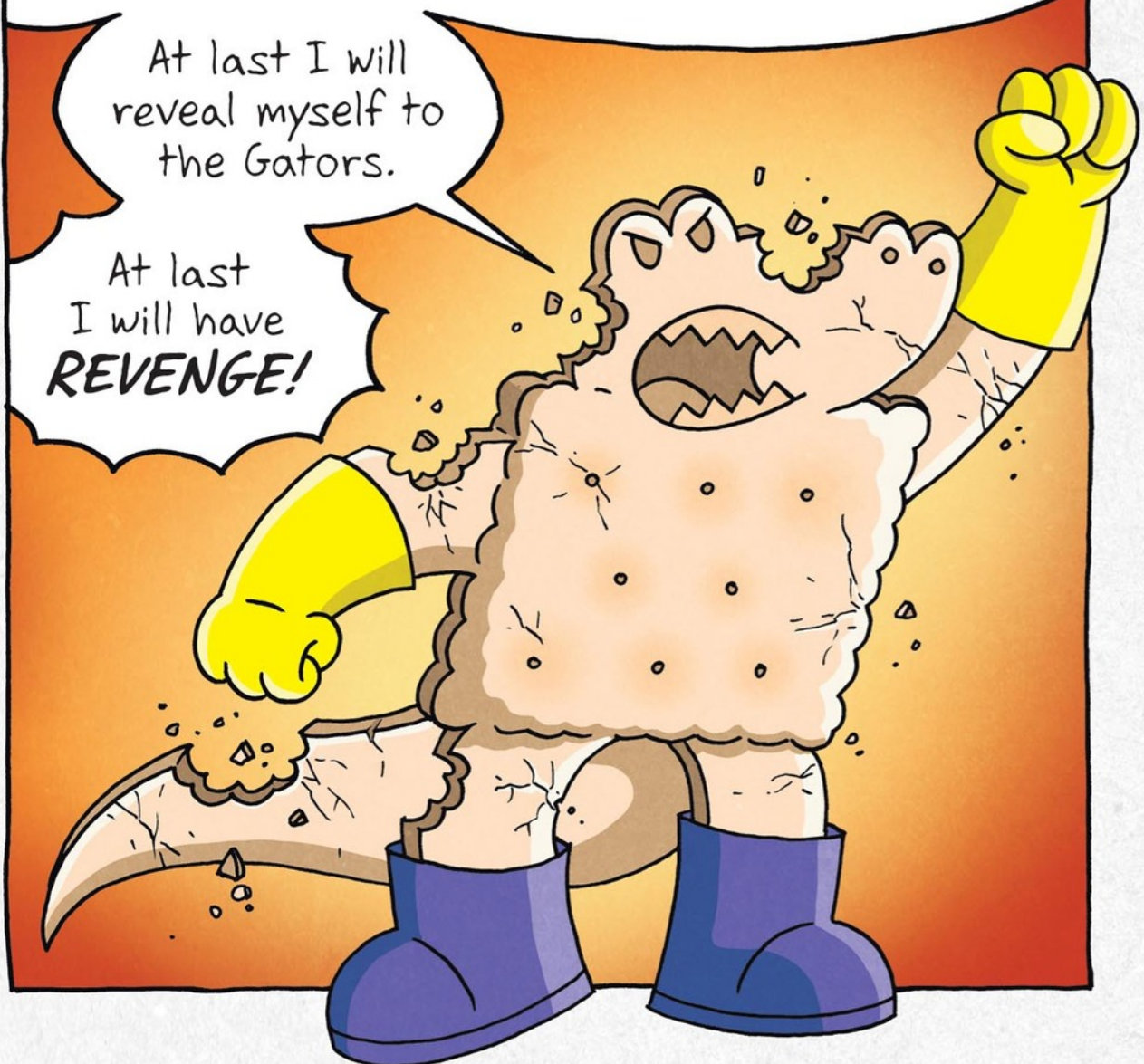
PREPARE THE MOLD!



This super dough will make me **harder... better... faster... STRONGER!!**

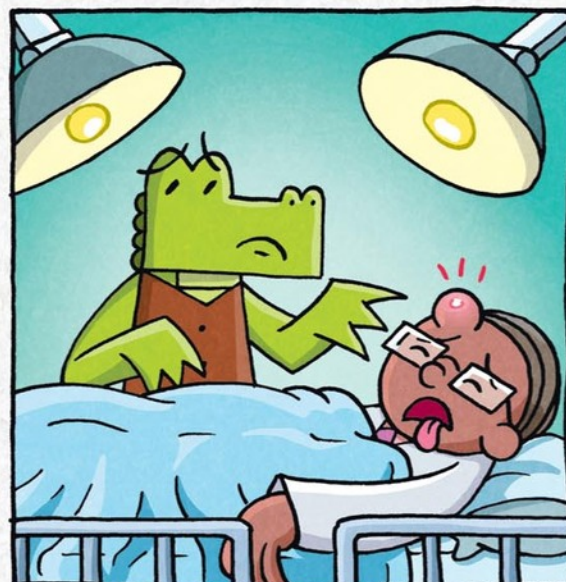
At last I will reveal myself to the Gators.

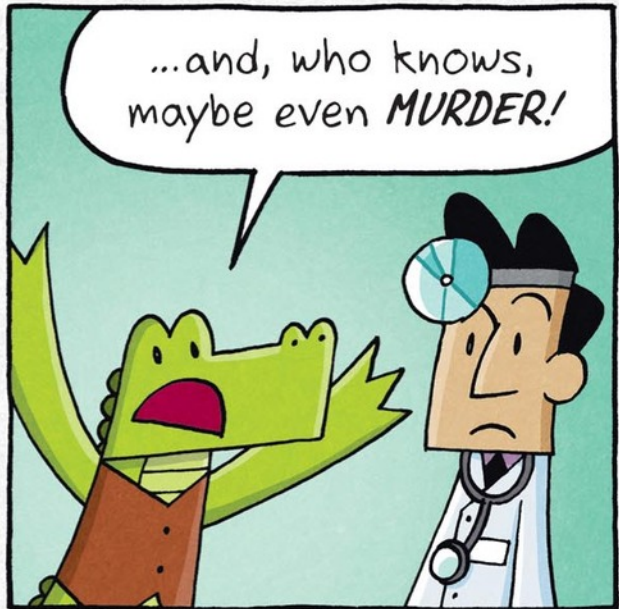
At last I will have **REVENGE!**



Chapter 8



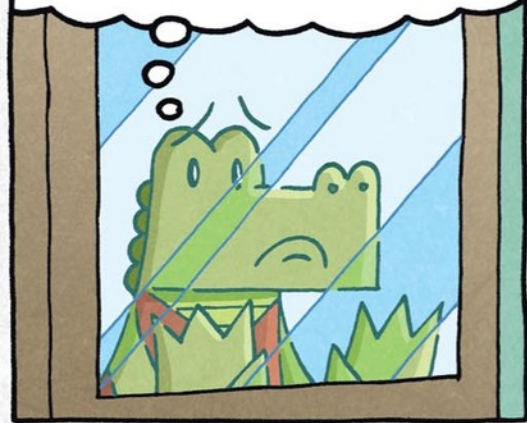




Whoever's behind all this means *business!* I hope Mango's faring better than I am. I don't want him to get hurt...or *worse.*



We haven't been partners for long... but I just can't go through that again!



Nurse! Scalpel!



Shall I draw a dotted line to indicate where to make the incision?

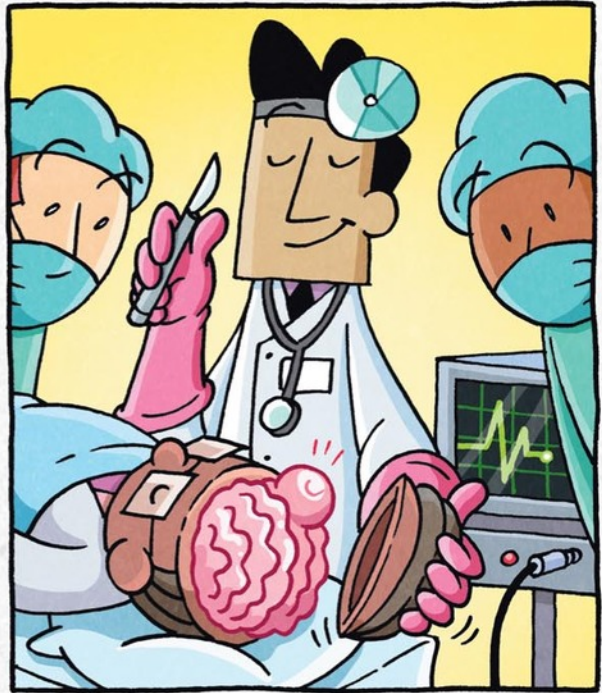


No need! I'm going to *eyeball* it.

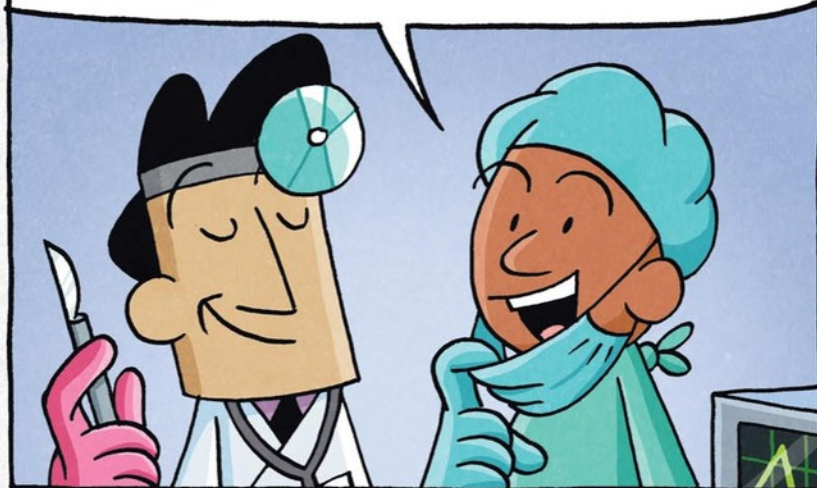




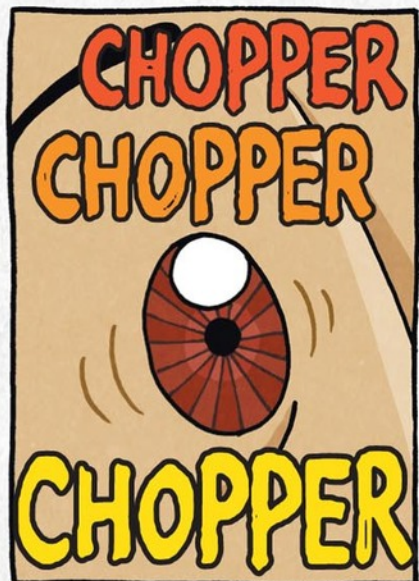
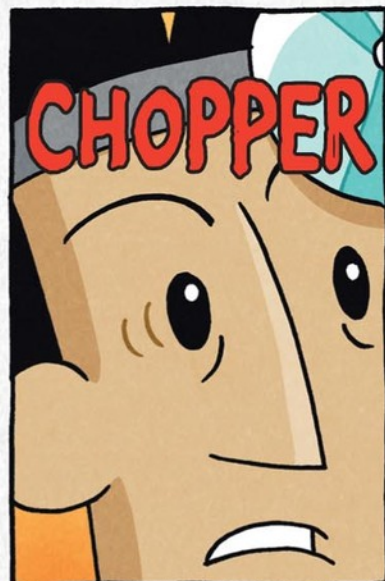
S
L
I
C
E



WOW! You really know how to chop a guy open! They should call you...



...the **CHOPPER!**



CHOPter 9

Many moons ago...



Here I am, Jake Hardbones, backpacking over the Scottish Highlands...

Or should I say,

DOCTOR

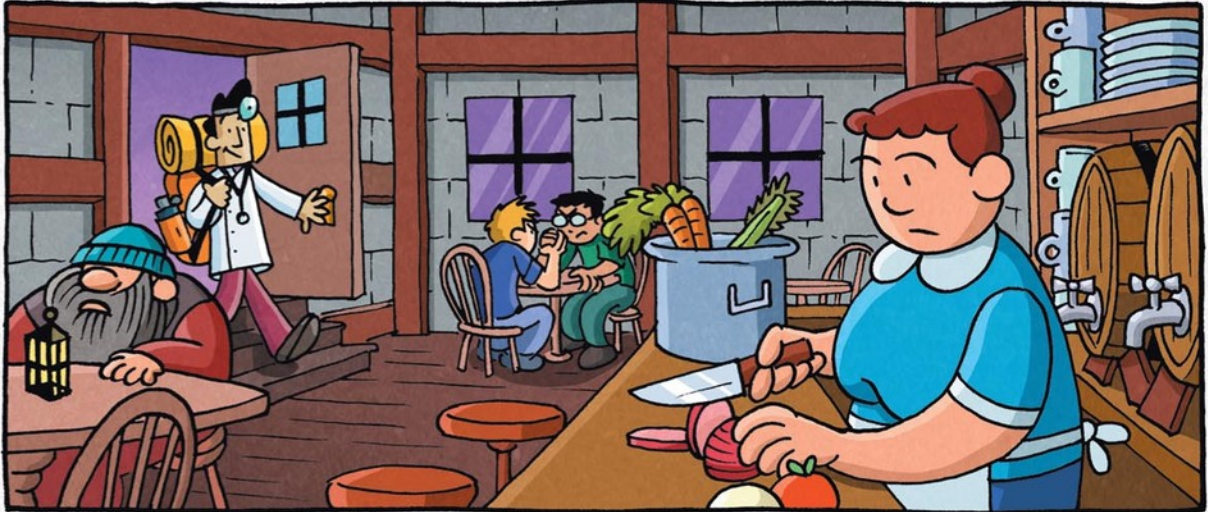
Jake Hardbones, as I'm on vacation in celebration of my graduation from Brain Surgery School!



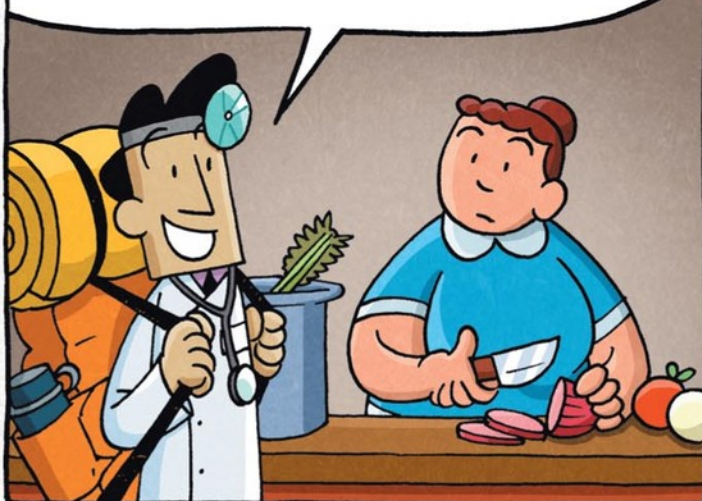
AH! A village! Perhaps the townsfolk will let me pick their brains about any local legends!



Pick their brains! HA HA!
Now that I'm a brain
surgeon, I finally know
what that means!



Hello! I'm not from around
these parts. This seems like
a place with tales to tell.



≡SIGHE Well—

OY!





Ya wanna hear a **STORY**, do ya?
Indeed I do!



Even *more* moons ago...
travelers came to this
quaint village on a
MACHINE from the **SKY!**
It was a helicopter.



These beings **PROBED** our minds with their technology!
It was a news crew filming a
piece on bed-and-breakfasts.



Hoping to chase them out of town, the local mystic
CURSED their flying contraption with **RABIES!**

That part's
true.

In the dark of the lunar eclipse they got in their machine and **FLEW OFF**, never to be seen again!

They were here maybe twenty minutes.



But on nights like this, their **FLYING DEVIL** can still be heard...



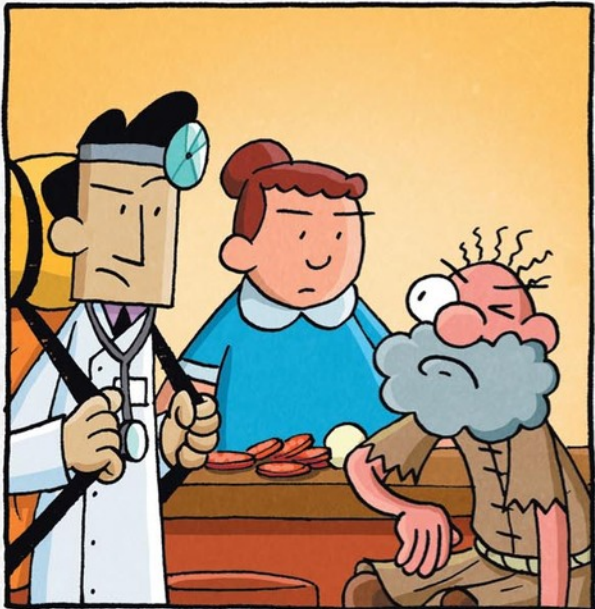
And **SOME** say it haunts the hillside waiting for victims to pass its curse on to.



Who says that?

I do. I say it. I said it just now. Weren't you listening?







I hear that lumberjack again... Did I get turned around in the dark?

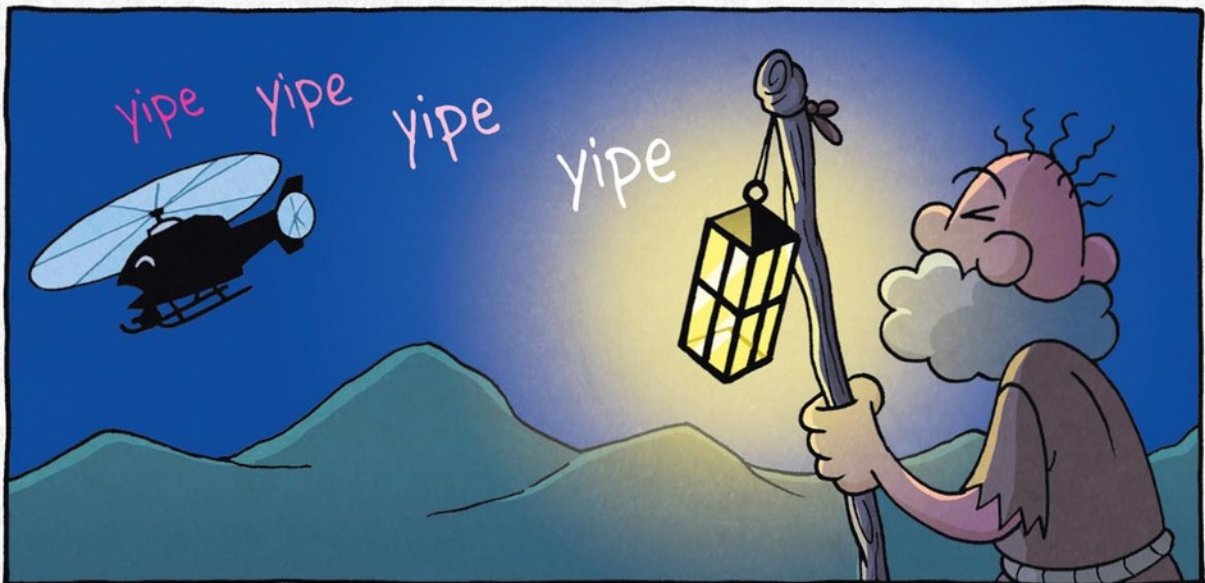
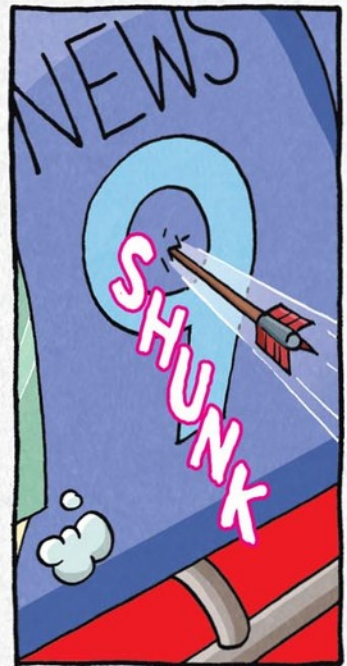
CHOP
CHOP
CHOP

Oh, wait—I've got a light on my head!

CHOP
CHOP
CHOP
CHOP



**C
H
O
M
P**

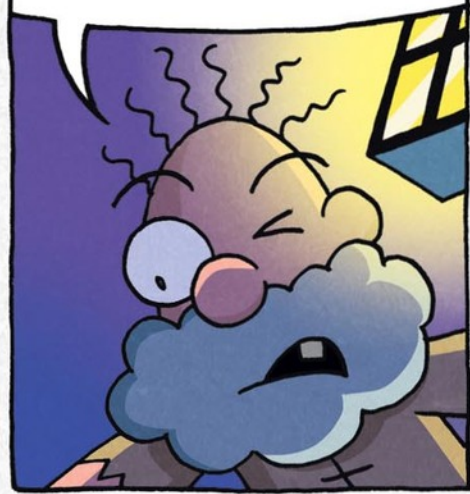


You were bitten pretty bad, son. You need a doctor.

I...I **AM** a doctor...



Not just a doctor anymore. You're a WERE-COPTER now.



That machine's curse is coursing through your veins. And that's **bad news**. Now, whenever there **IS** news, you will be forced to transform into a news copter to report on it. You have become...



...**DOCTOR COPTER!**



Nooooooooooooooooooooo

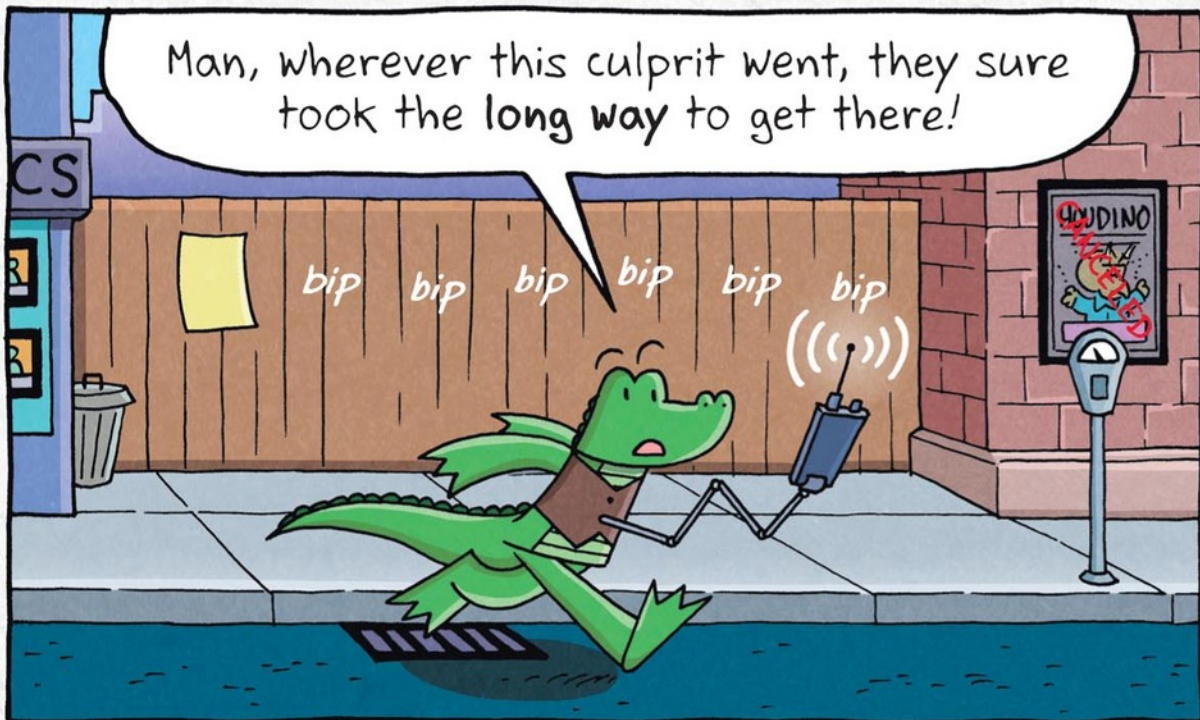


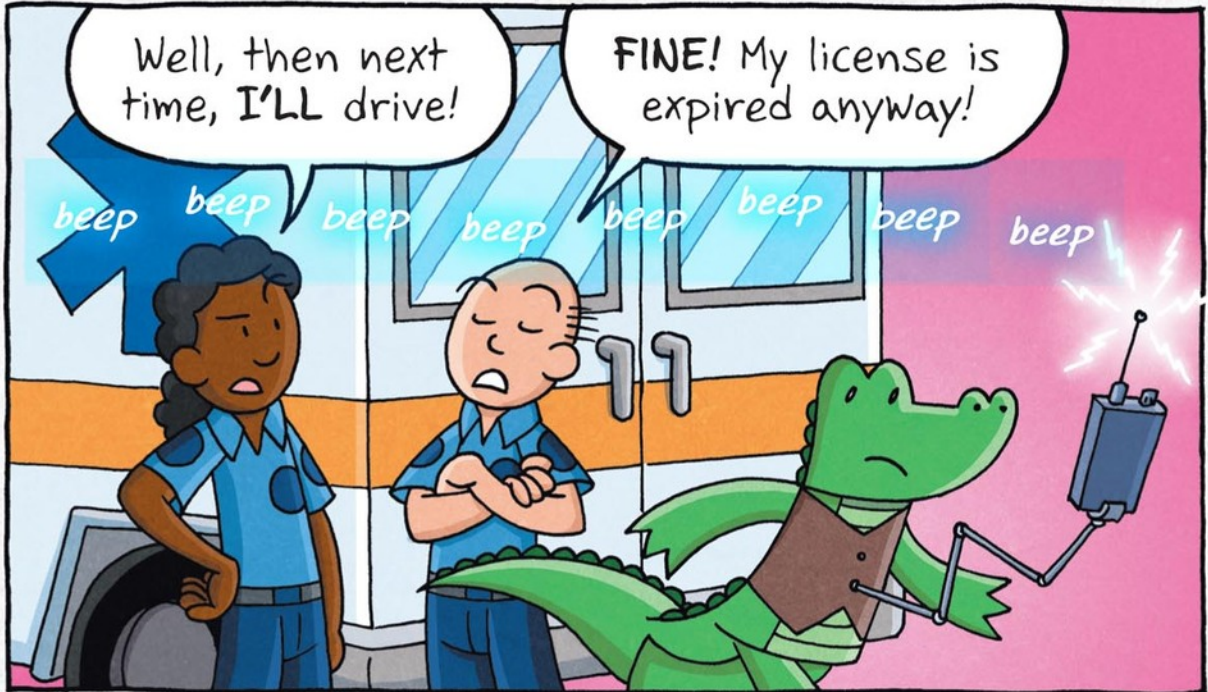
Chapter 10

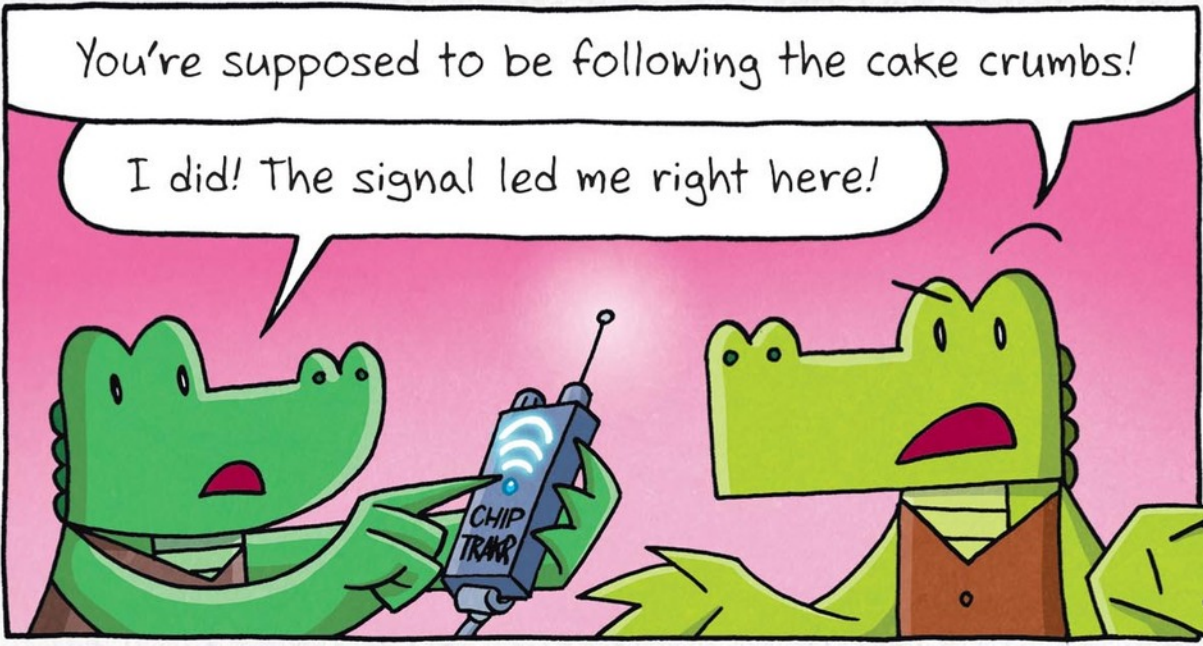
Meanwhile, all over town...



...Mango is tracking the chocolate microchips.







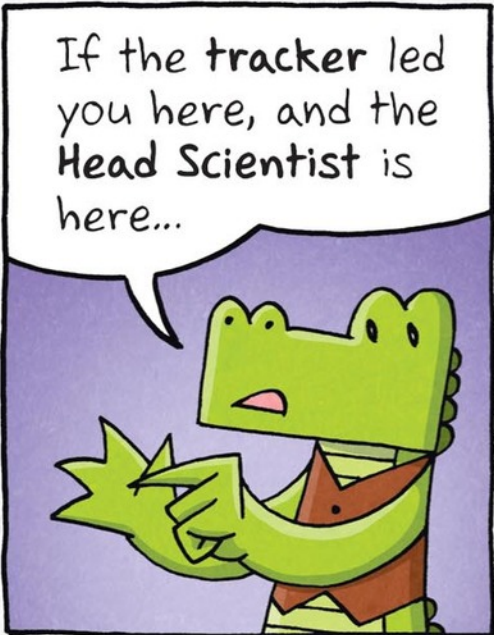
You're supposed to be following the cake crumbs!

I did! The signal led me right here!

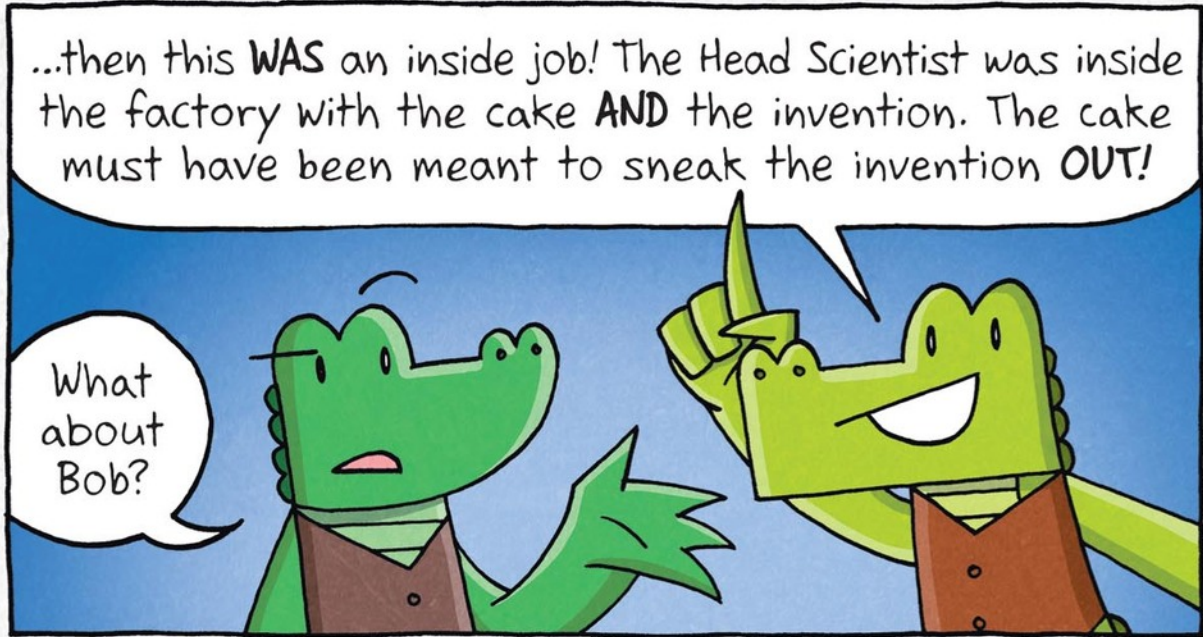


Well, not right here. It led me all over town—

Hold up!



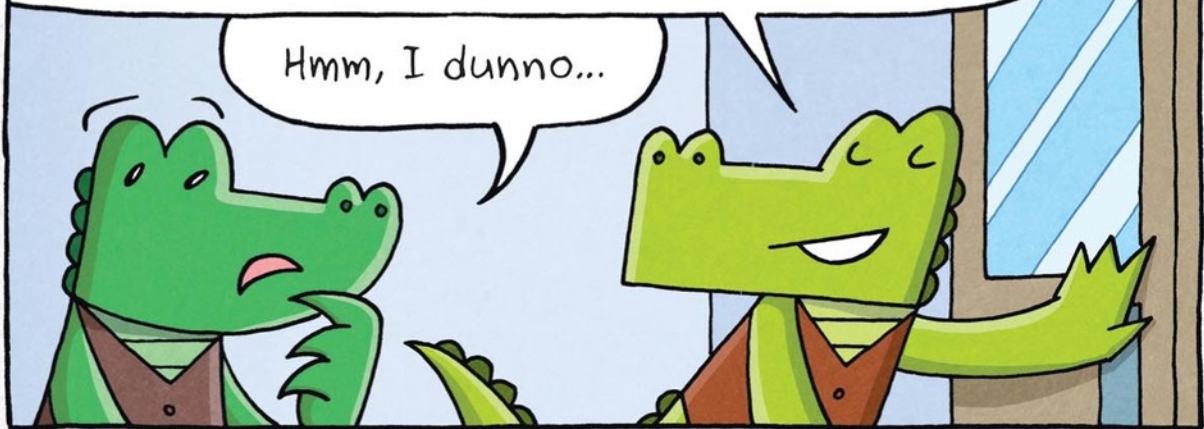
If the tracker led you here, and the Head Scientist is here...



...then this **WAS** an inside job! The Head Scientist was inside the factory with the cake **AND** the invention. The cake must have been meant to sneak the invention **OUT!**

What about Bob?

Bob was **clearly** his partner, who double-crossed him, set off the explosion as a distraction, and made off with the invention for *himself!*



DROP THAT BRAIN!



**THIS MAN IS THE CRIMINAL!
WAKE UP!**



YOU were gonna steal the money-ray thing! The cake was YOUR idea! **CONFESS!**





I confess... I know it was wrong...

Ah-HA!



I ate some of the cake...even though it's not my birthday...



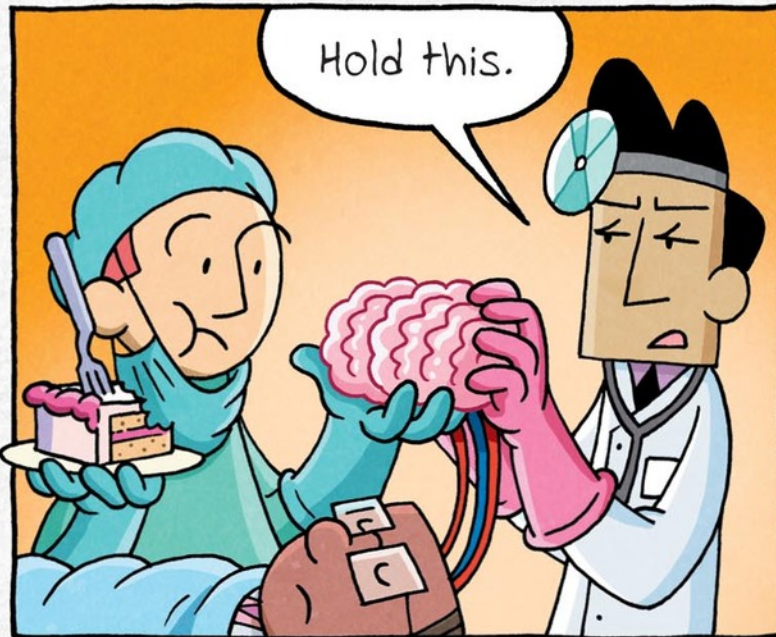
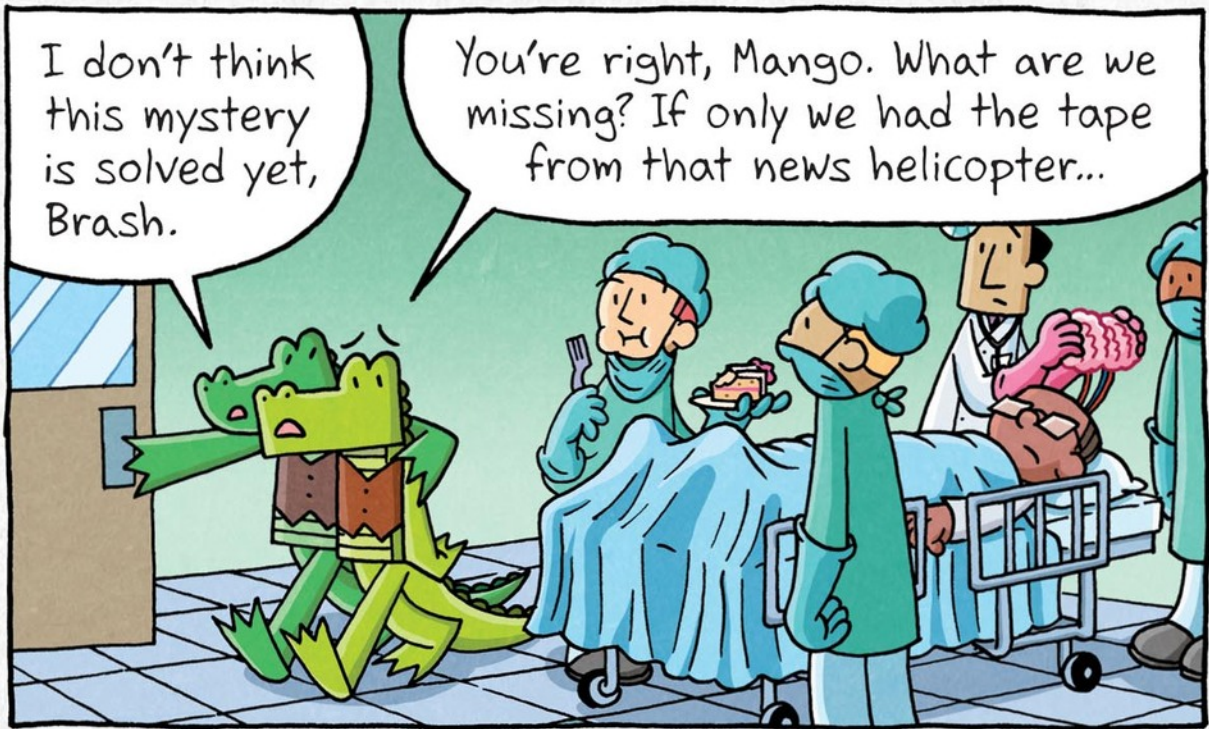
It's true! According to his ID, today's *not* his birthday!



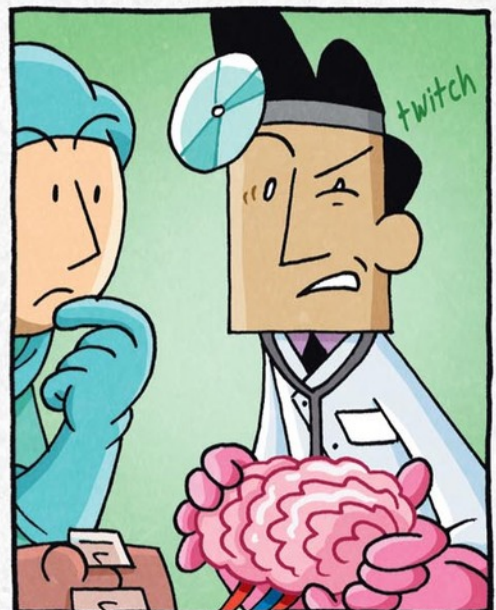
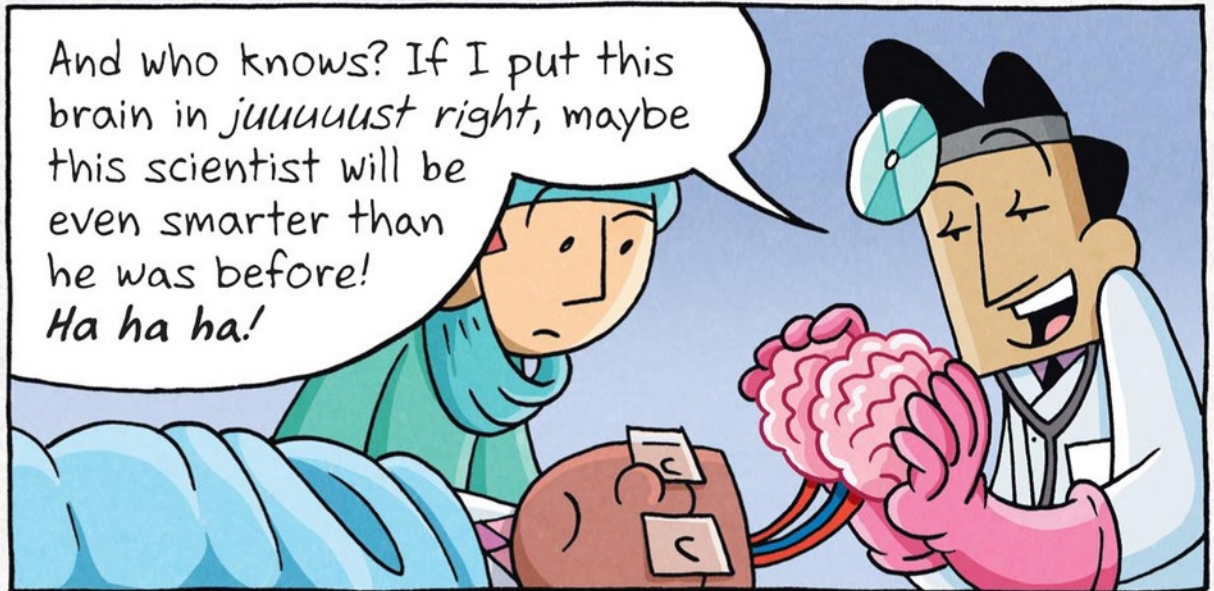
And look! I sliced him open, and found a slice of cake!



If he was going to sneak the device out in the cake...why would he *eat* the cake?









Let's get back to the bakery and watch this news footage!

SURGERY >>>



Brash...? What's wrong?



Mango... This investigation has me worried that something bad is going to happen.

At the bakery?



Brash, we're partners. I trust you with my life. So whatever you think will happen—

Mango.



The last time I went undercover at a bakery... my partner...

...**DIED.**

I lost one partner. And now...
I'm afraid of losing another.

I'm so sorry, Brash. I didn't know...
But *fear* is no reason to give up.

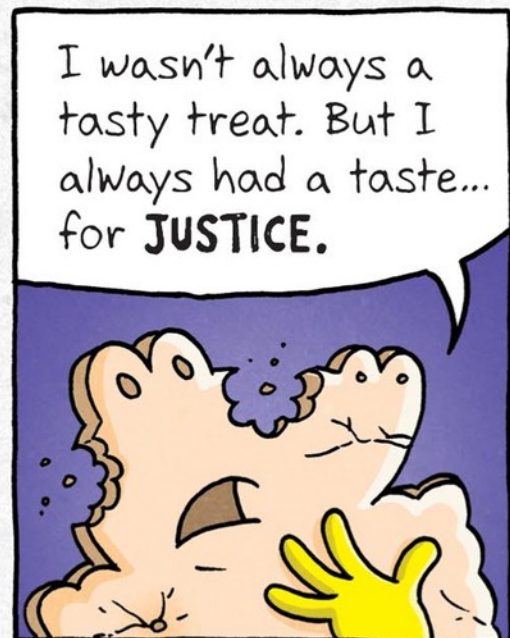
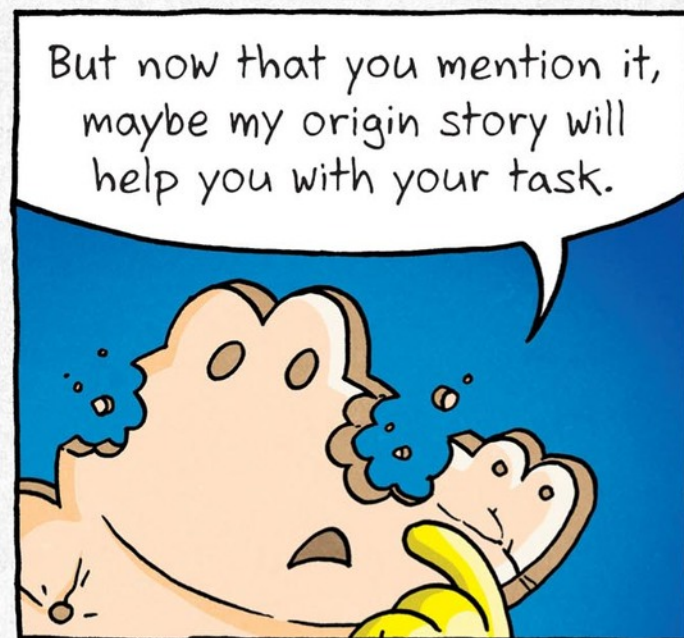
We're Investi**GATORS!**
Not Investi**QUITTERS!**

You won't lose me,
and I won't lose you!

You may think you've hit
rock bottom, but you
can go even lower...

...into the *sewer!*

Now let's flush ourselves
down the nearest toilet
and **GATOR DONE!**

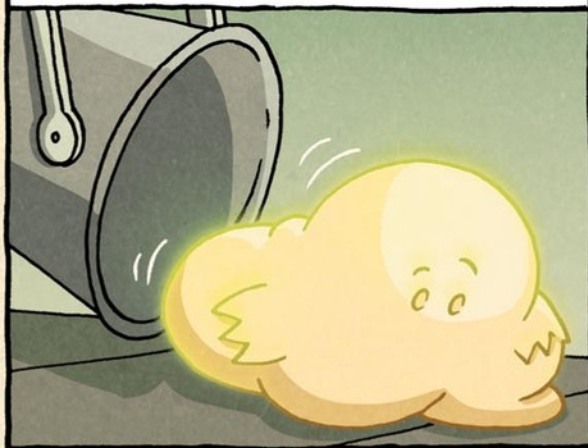


I fell into into a vat of radioactive cracker dough.

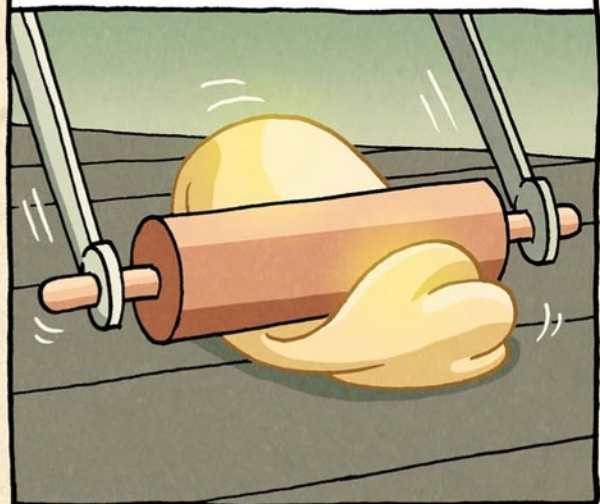


I thought I was going to die.

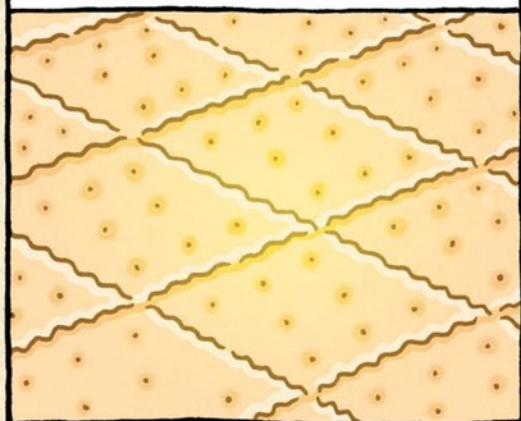
Instead, I became **one** with the dough.



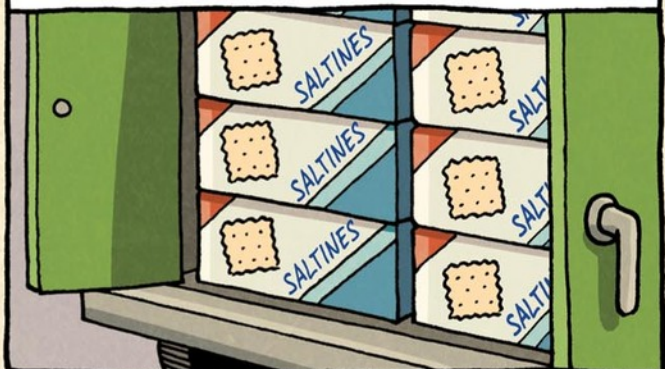
Machines rolled me out...



...and baked me into individual saltines.



Then I was packaged, put on a truck, and shipped off to who knows where.



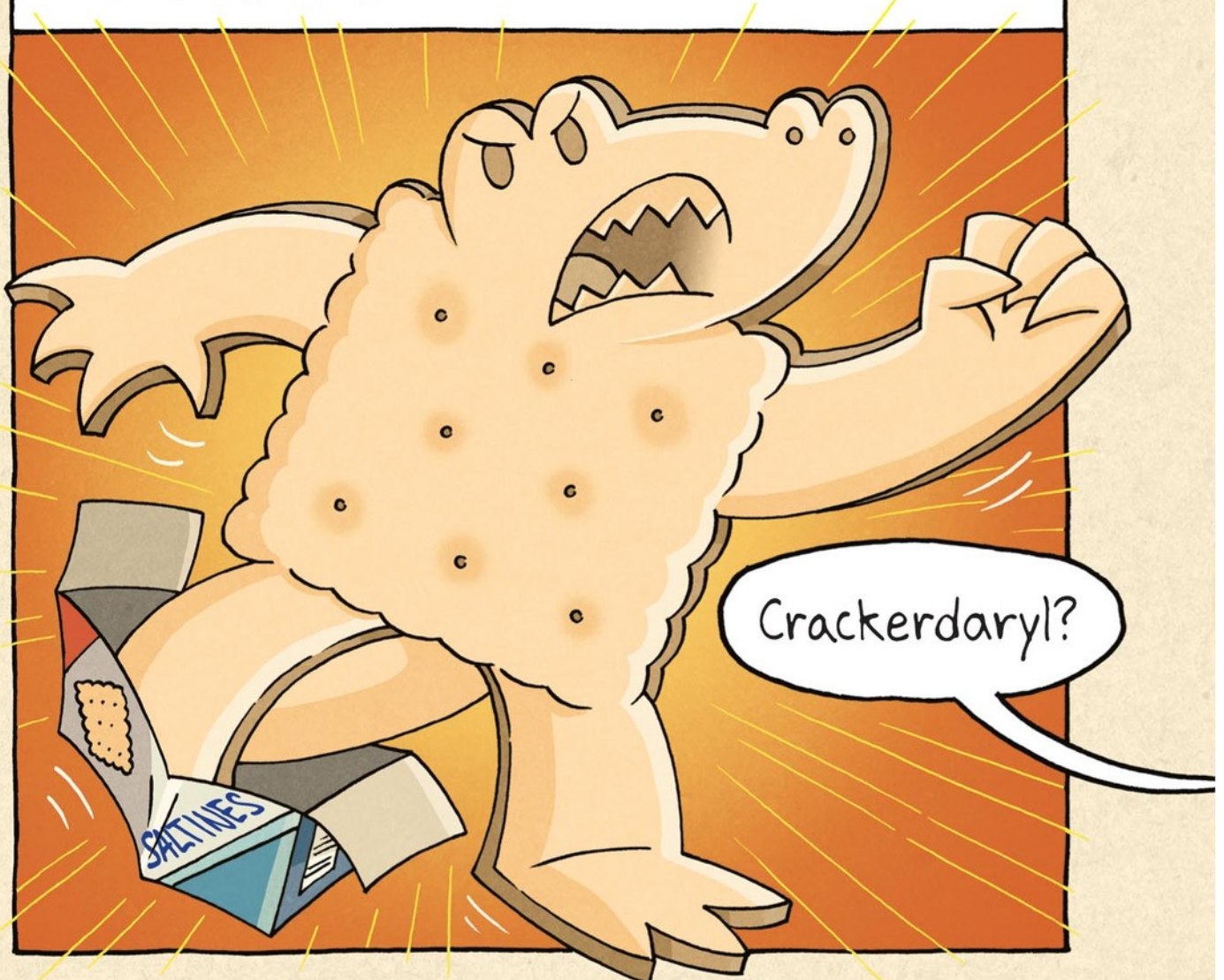
Inside the box I felt myself growing, thanks to the radiation.

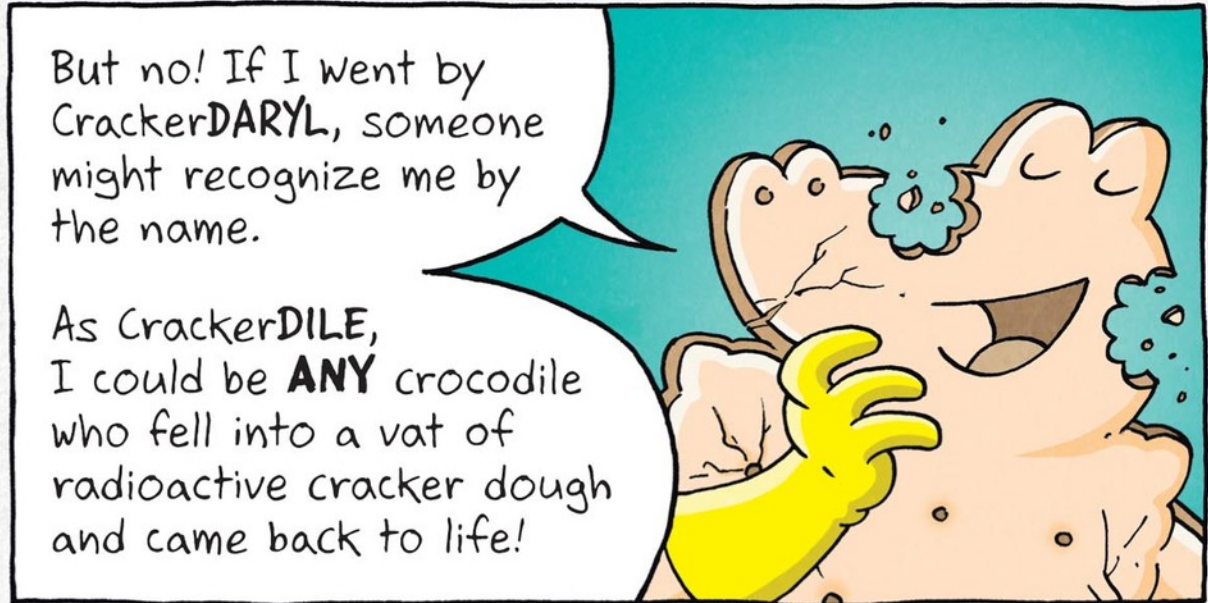
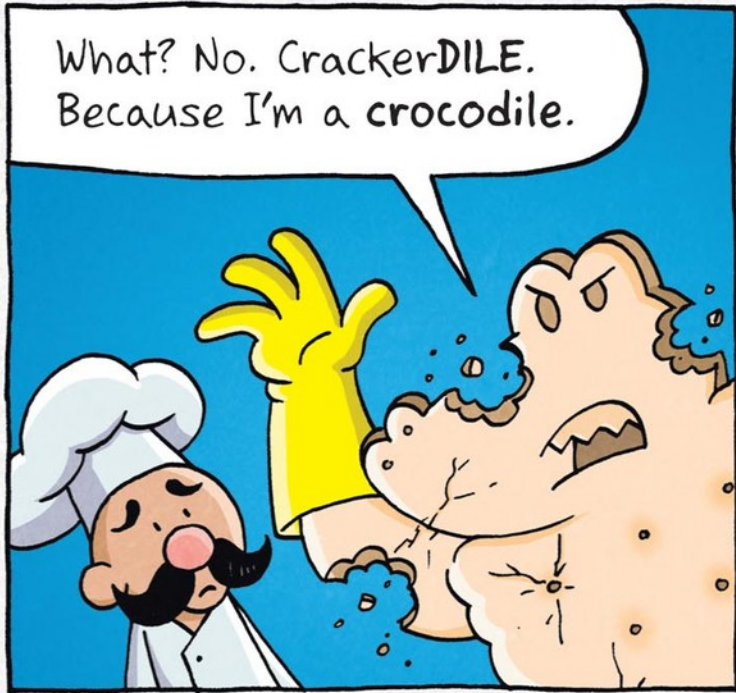


Or maybe it was the rapid-rise yeast.



I combined with all the other *me* crackers and **BURST** through that vacuum seal, forevermore to be known as—

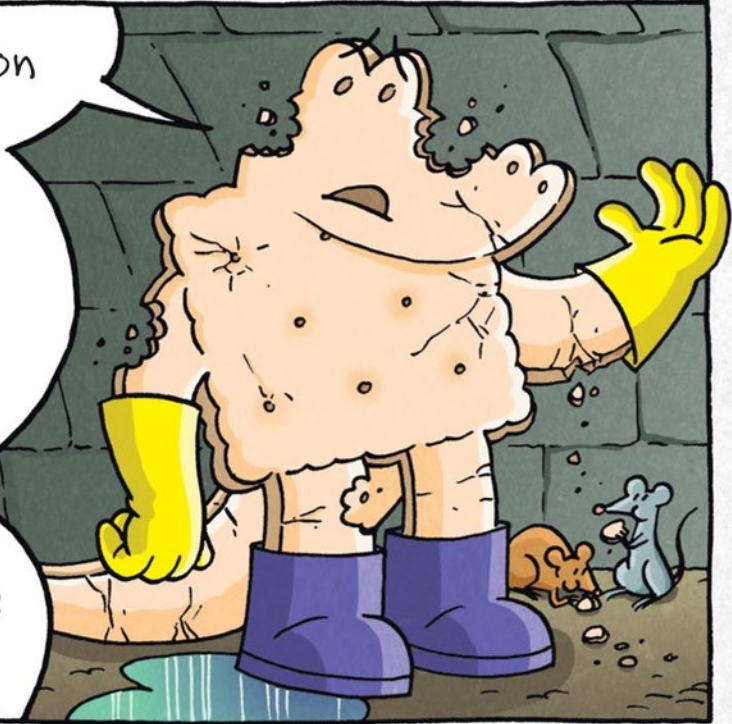




Life since my evolution
hasn't been kind.

The transformation
may have granted
me the **strength** of
a giant saltine...

...but it also made
me **weak** to moisture
and hungry vermin.

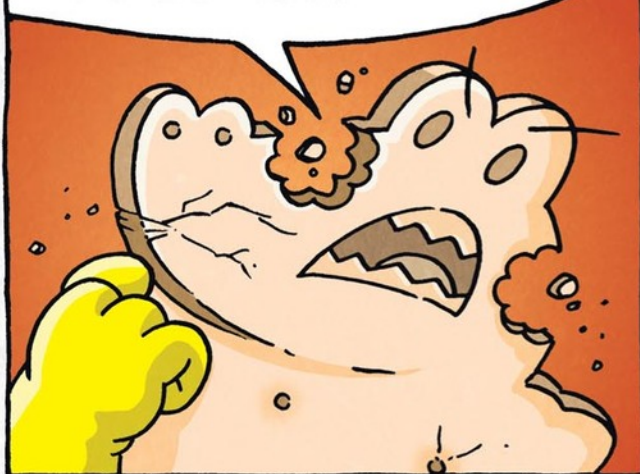


Then why do you live
in the sewer? It's full
of both moisture
AND vermin!

I might be the crumbling
remains of a **cracker**
on the outside...



...but I'm still a **crocodile**
on the inside!



Well, you will crumble
no more after you
get inside...

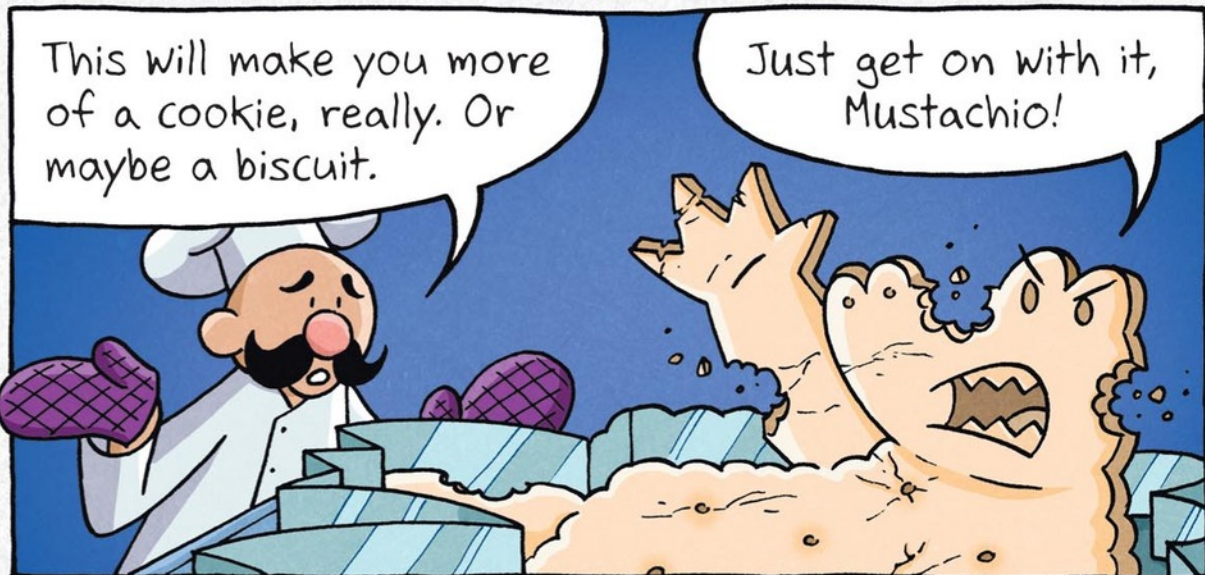




...and then
come *OUT* of...
this baking
mold!



With your **SUPER DOUGH**, I'll be invincible! Soon the
world will bask in the fresh-from-the-oven heat of
Crackerdile—**REBAKED!**

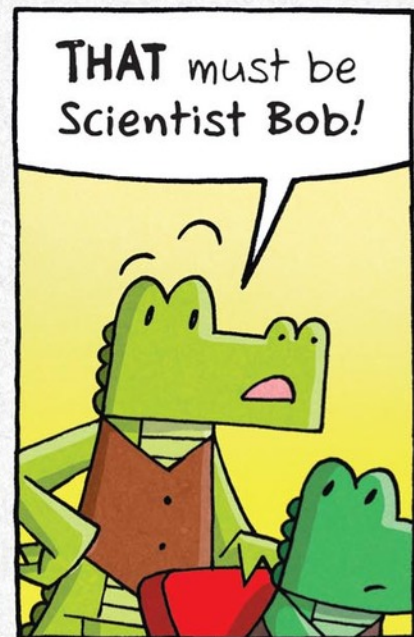
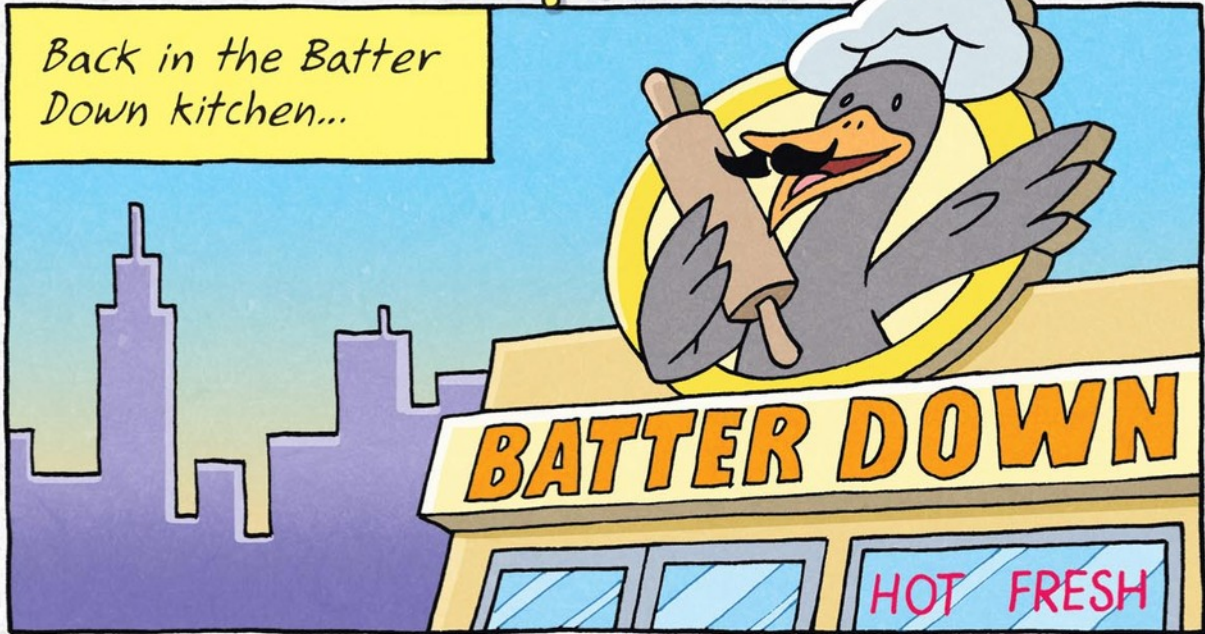


This will make you more
of a cookie, really. Or
maybe a biscuit.

Just get on with it,
Mustachio!



Chapter 11



Then the cake and the guy who ordered it show up.



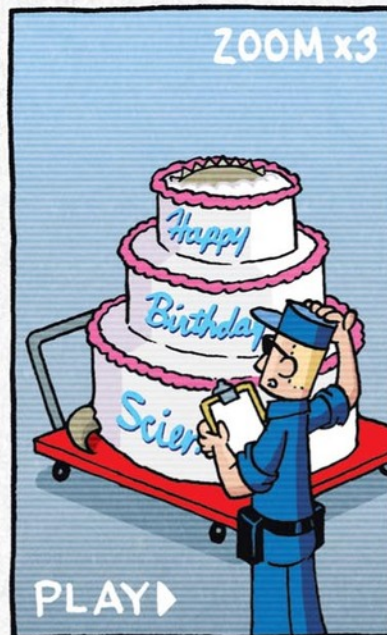
Now that I think about it, why was he in a raincoat when the sun was out?



And then the guard wheels the cake inside.



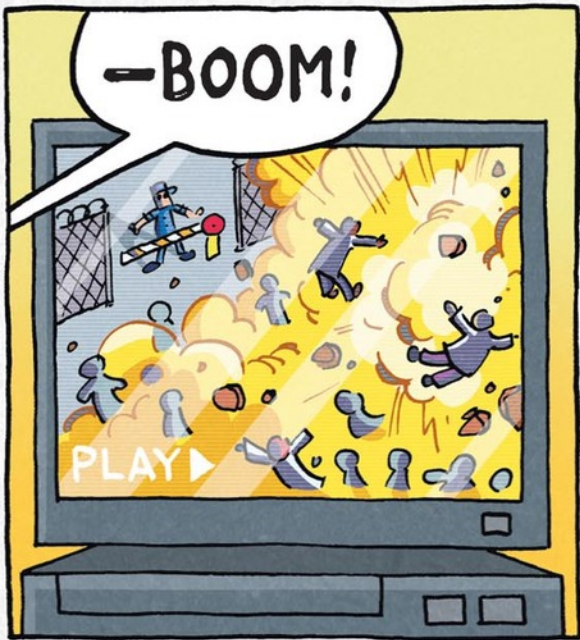
WAIT! GO BACK. **ENHANCE!**







Then the Head Scientist's assistant calls everyone back inside, aaand—



-BOOM!



There's a lot of smoke. Can't make much out.

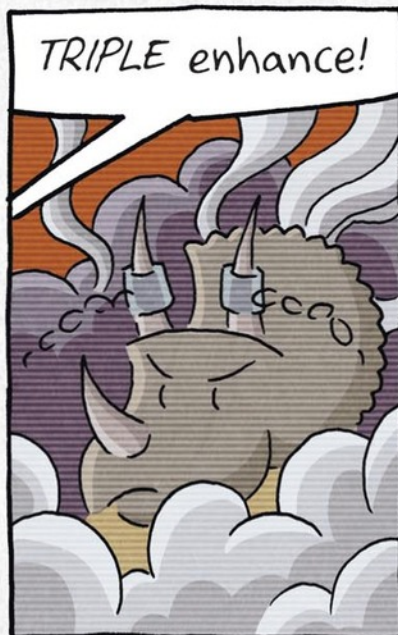
STOP! Freeze right there!



Are those...horns?



Double enhance!



TRIPLE enhance!



GIVE IT ALL THE ENHANCE!



That's a triceratops!



Not just ANY triceratops—That's **HOUDINO**, the dinosaur escape artist!



That means the guy in the raincoat...was a hooded Houdino! An escape artist and master of disguise, apparently!



Junior Assistant Baker Marie! Where's the store copy of the receipt for that giant birthday cake?

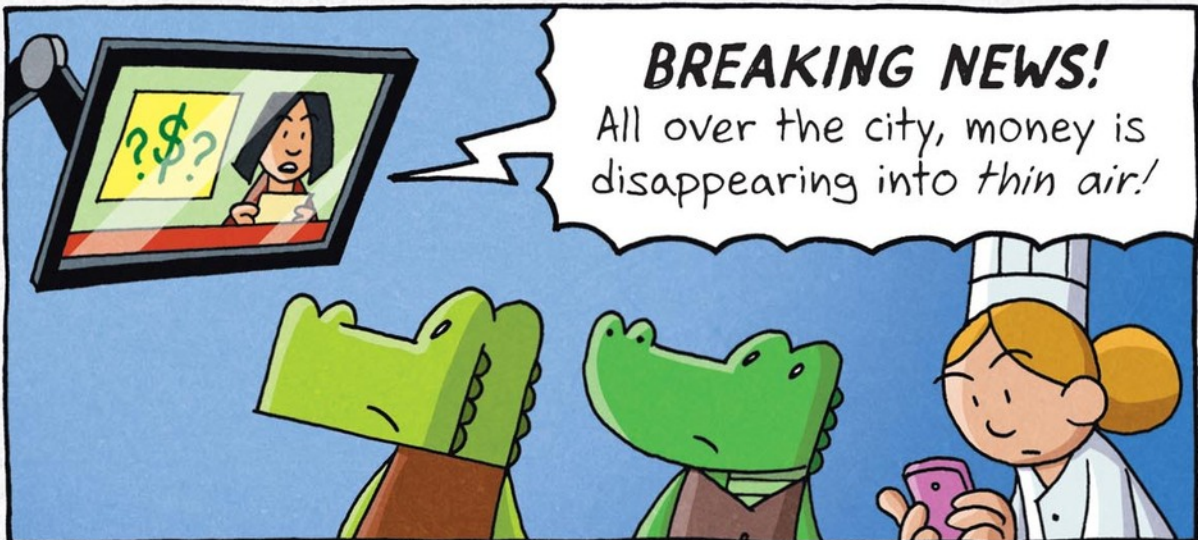


Here.



If he paid with a credit card, we can track where else he's been!

Drat! He paid cash! How are we going to find him?



BREAKING NEWS!

All over the city, money is disappearing into *thin air!*

This is Cici Boringstories in the *Action News Now* studio!

The city's banks are **EMPTY!**



MONEY GO BYE-BYE



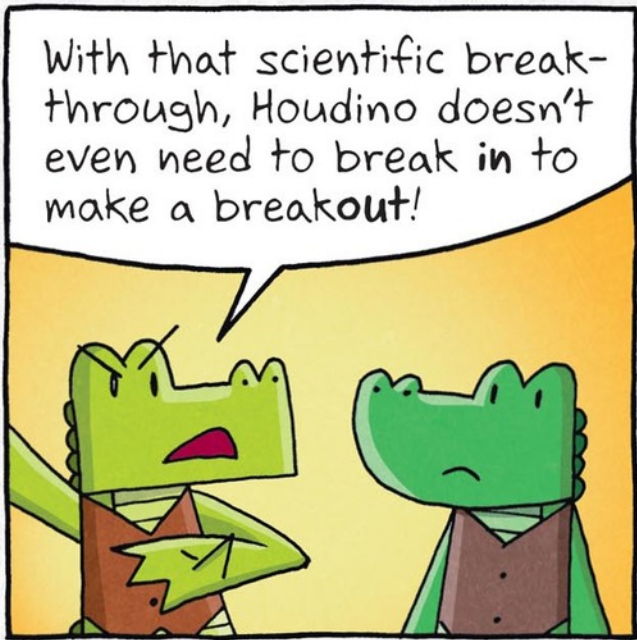
ING REPORT — ACTION NEWS NOW — BREAKING REPORT — AC

One minute the money was there, the next it was gone. *Poof!* It's like someone has a laser beam that can suck up money through walls!



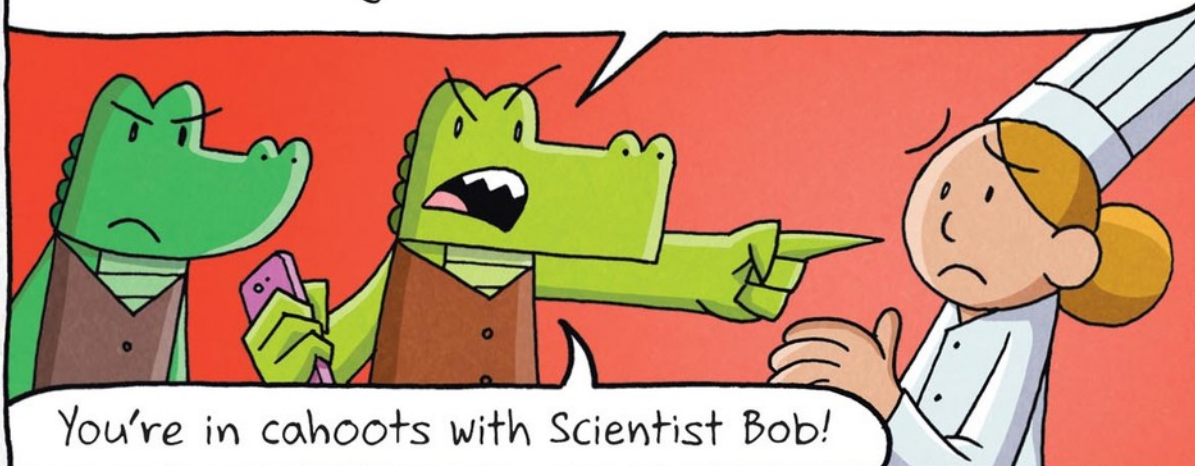
One thing's for sure: If your money's in a safe, your money *ISN'T SAFE!*







...what he actually saw was the name *JABMarie!*
Bob was talking to **Junior Assistant Baker Marie!**



You're in cahoots with Scientist Bob!

What's he need the oven for?

Oven? What are you talking about?



The **BIG** oven is missing!

Medium oven.



We have, like, **SO** many ovens. You can't expect me to notice if one is missing.



You only had **THREE!**

And for some people, they're very easy to tell apart!



FORGET THAT! WHERE'S HOUDINO? WHAT HAVE YOU DONE WITH GUSTAVO?

I know nuttin' about no Houdino! And Gustavo... It was just an accident! *Honest!*



We... We saw him fall down a manhole. And instead of calling for help...we did nothing.



What do you mean, "WE"?

GUSTAVO!



It's-a me!





Chef Mustachio!

I'm... I'm all right...

Well, this mystery certainly solved itself.



I guess our work here is done. **CASE CLOSED!**

What? **No, Mango!** **NOT** case closed. There are still many threads to resolve!

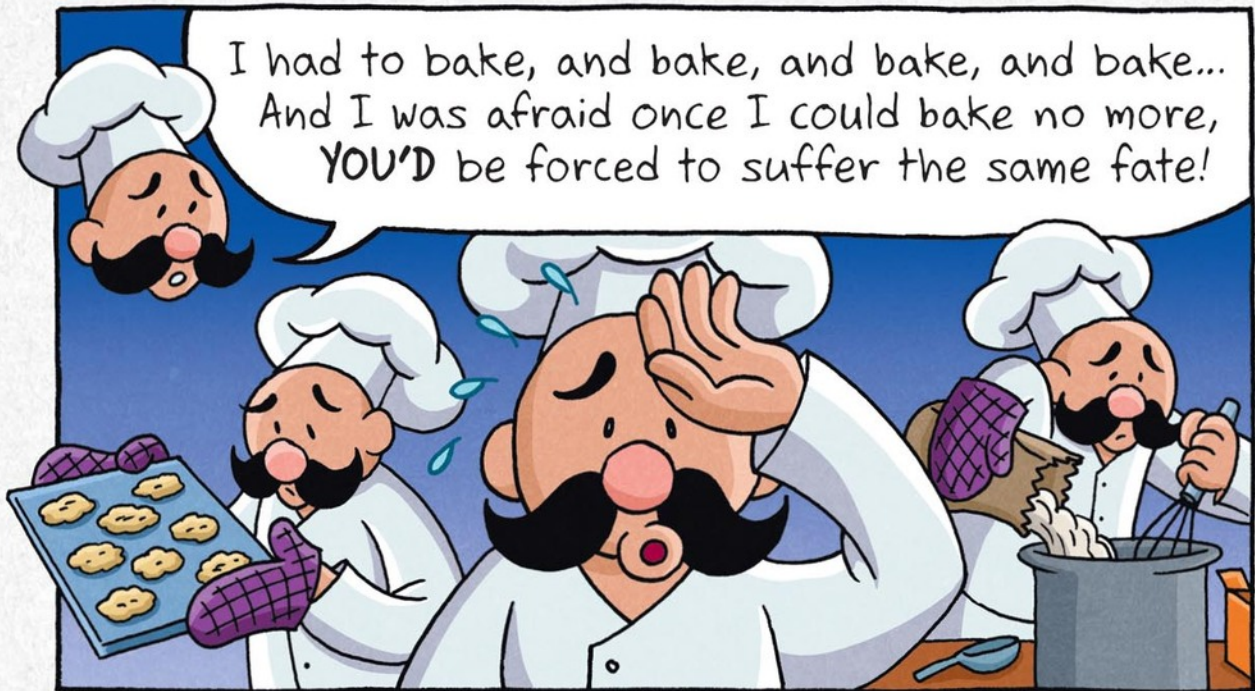


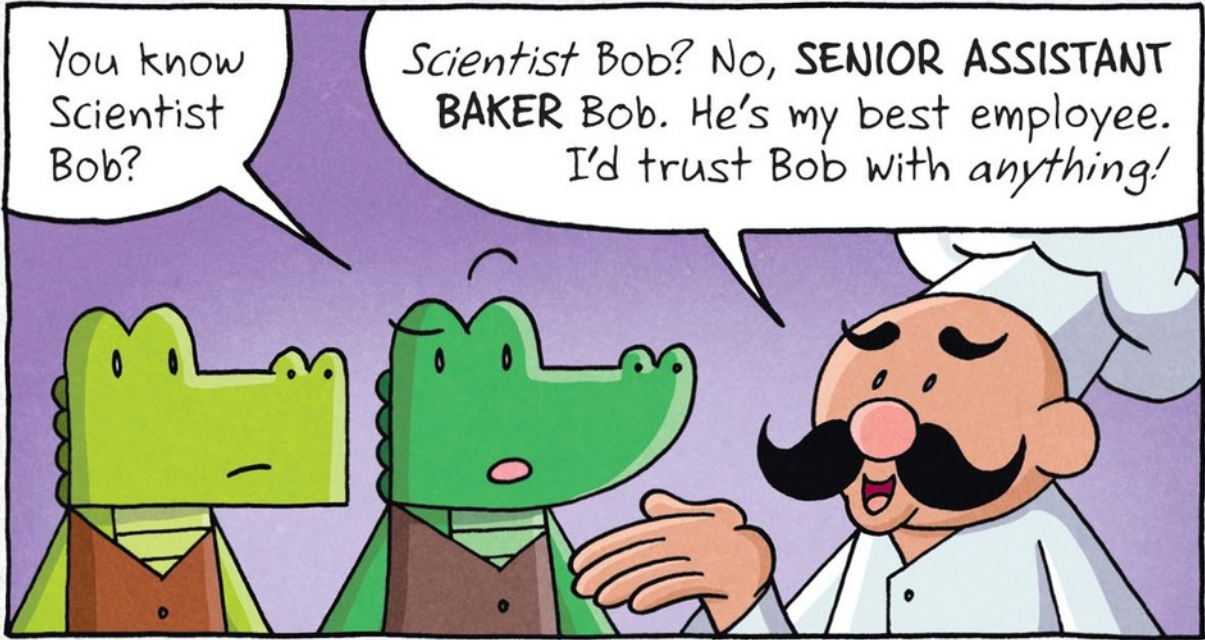
Ah! Junior Assistant Baker Marie! I'm so glad you're okay.

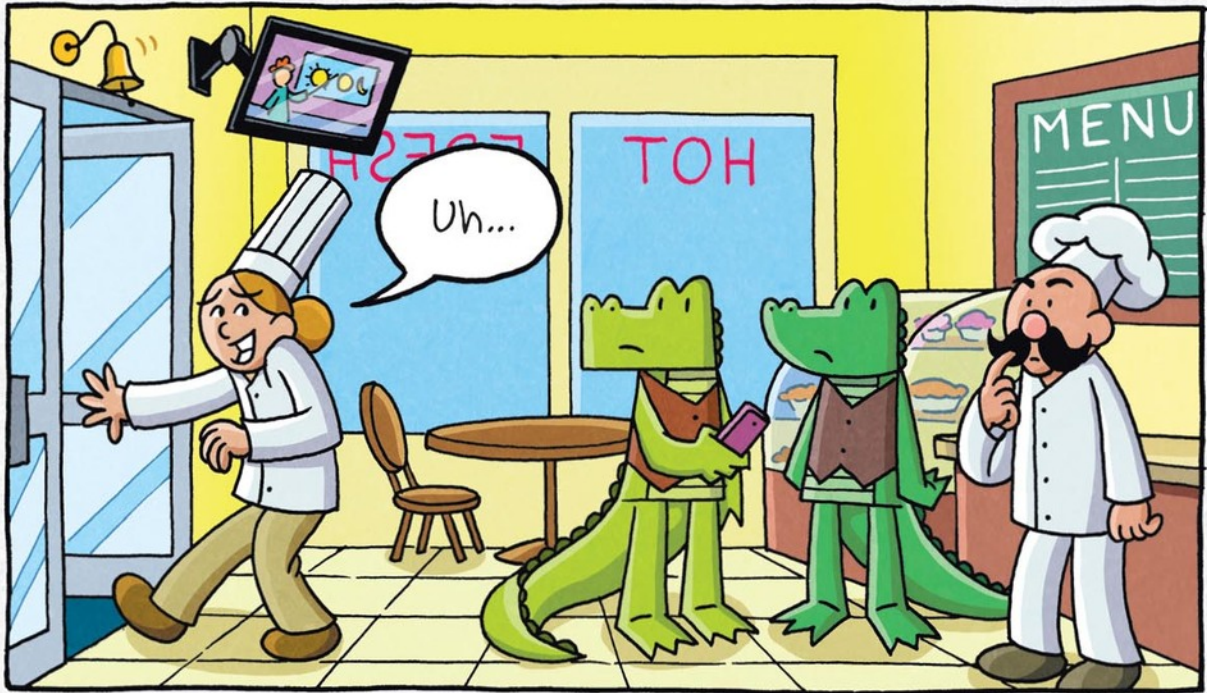
Um, thanks?



When I found myself in chains I feared the worst!







Bob was tired of living in Chef Mustachio's mushadow. We wanted to start our own bakery together!



But **GUSTAVO** keeps all his **BEST** recipes in his **HEAD**!



What about the ones in his book?



That book only goes up to **ÉCLAIR**! There are **twenty-one** more letters' worth of recipes after that! The only way to figure out Gustavo's secret recipes is to reverse engineer them!



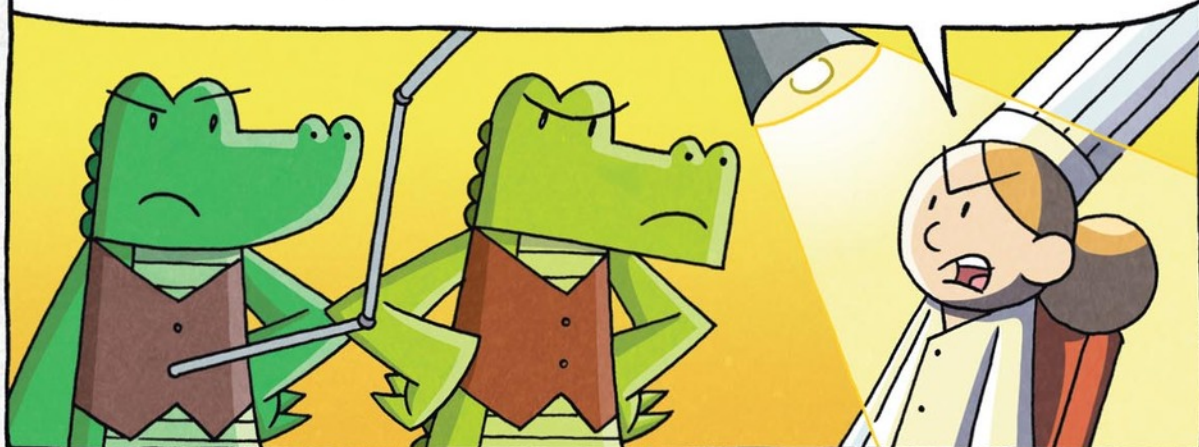
But that takes more science than we had available to us here.



And at the Science Factory, they've got *all* the science!



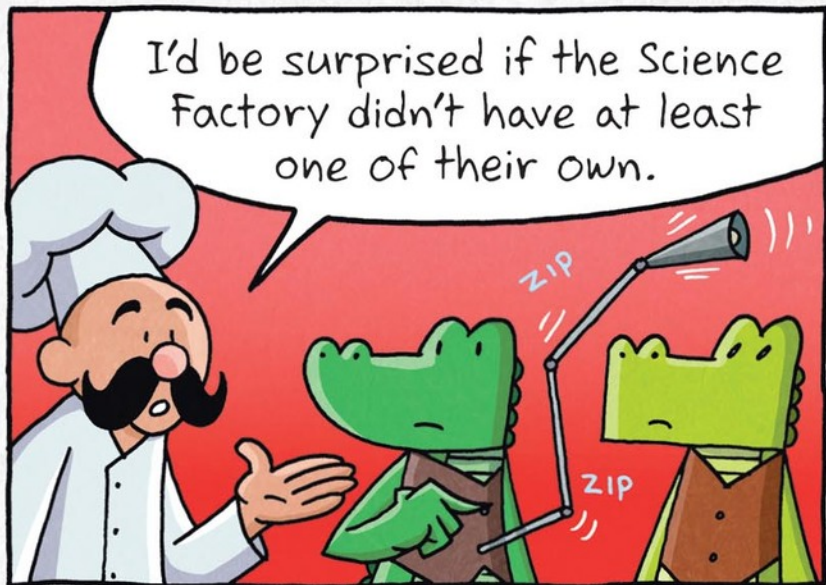
THAT'S RIGHT! When Bob and I saw Gustavo fall down that manhole, it was the perfect opportunity to put our plan into action. We didn't think he was *missing*. We just thought he was stuck in that hole.



So Bob disguised himself as a scientist to blend in at the Science Factory...

...and deconstructed Gustavo's baked goods with **science** to steal his secret recipes!







Dino.



Dino.



Dino.



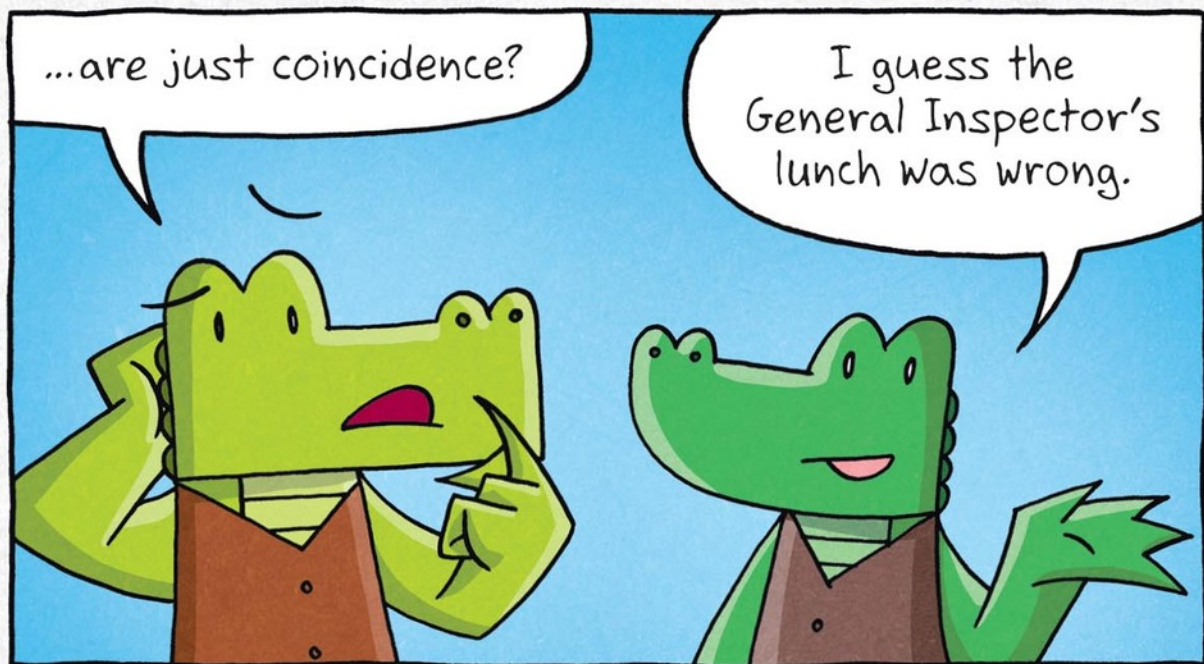
Who—

ENOUGH!

HE DOESN'T KNOW HOUDINO!



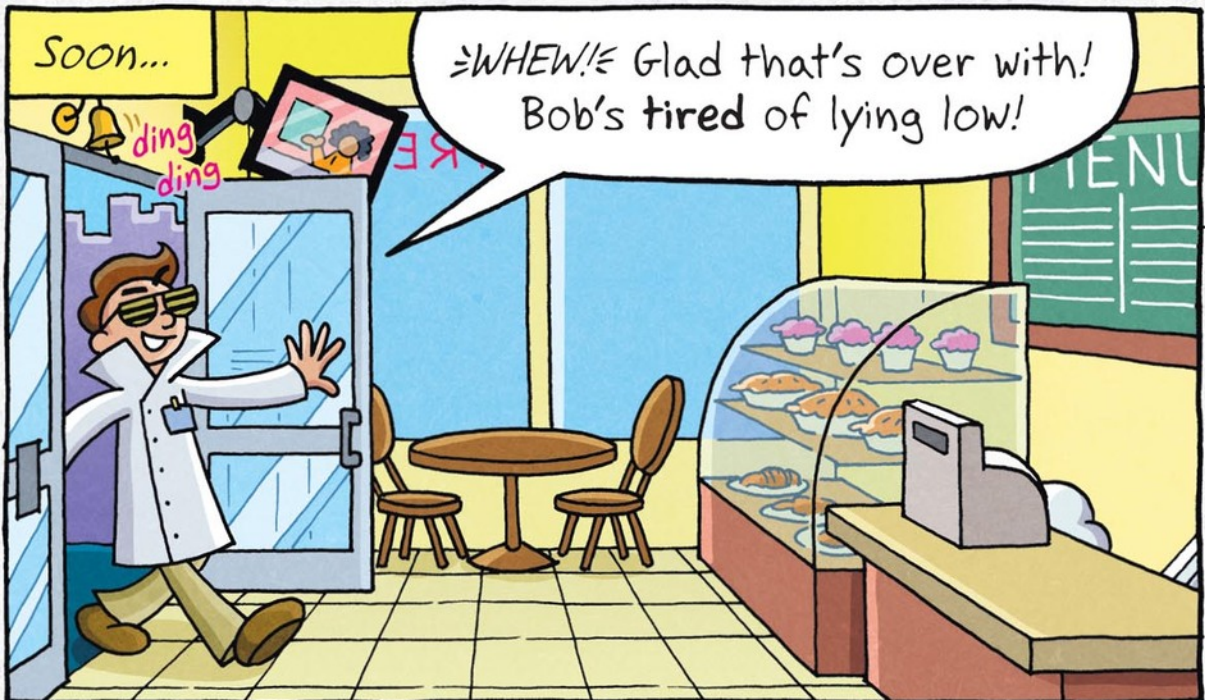
WHICH MEANS...the connections between Gustavo's disappearance, Bob and Marie's recipe thieving, and Houdino's cake shenanigans...



...are just coincidence?

I guess the General Inspector's lunch was wrong.



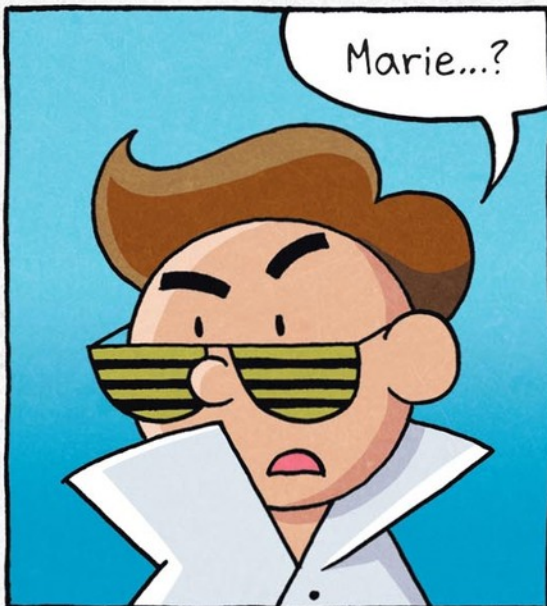


Good thing I just happened to run out of the factory with these stolen recipes right before the explosion!



And with Gustavo stuck in that manhole, **BAKER BOB'S** is gonna have the best baked goods in the world!

Marie...?



CLAMP!



Oh, dang!

Hi, Bob.

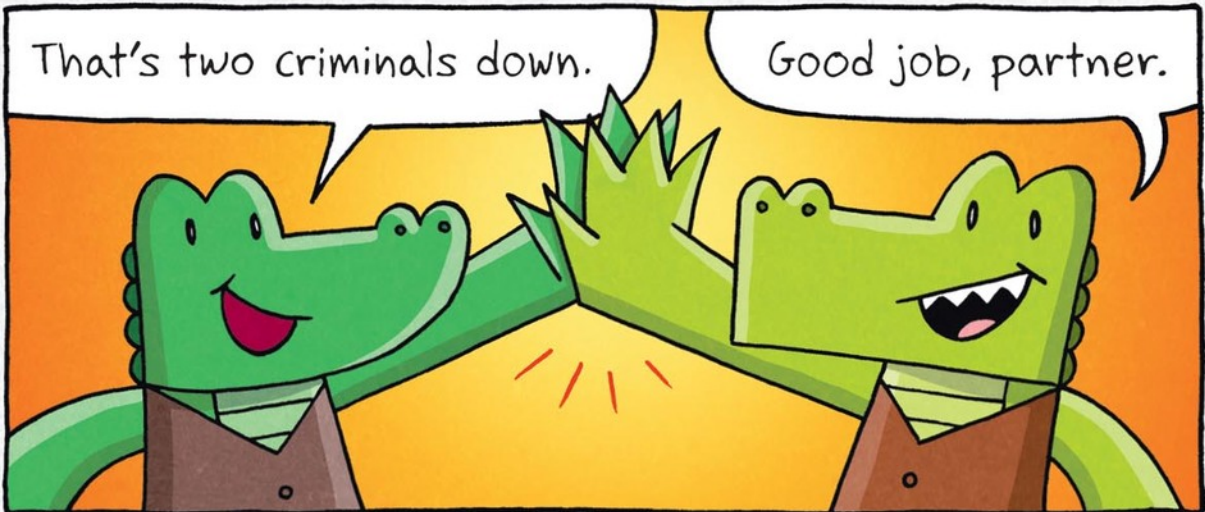


Chapter 12



That's two criminals down.

Good job, partner.



Now we've got to figure out how to catch Houdino before he robs the entire city!

That triceratops will be hard to find.



Houdino can easily blend in with a crowd.
ESPECIALLY when he's wearing a raincoat!

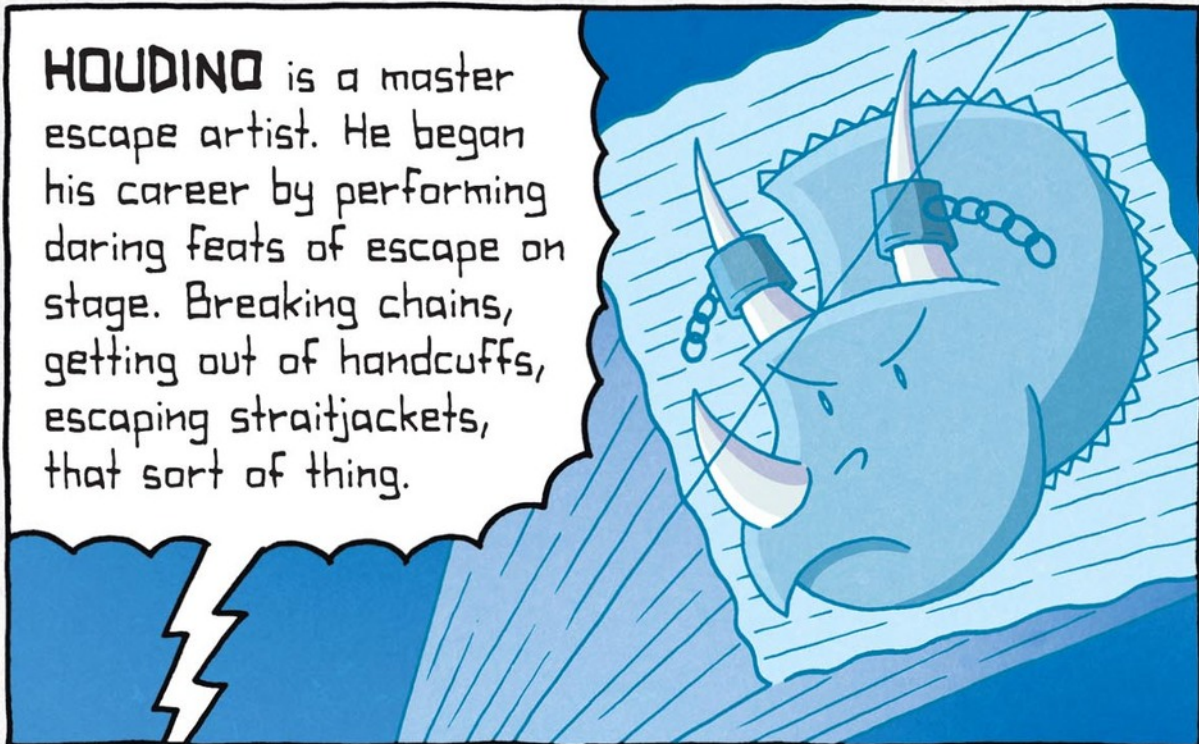
Indeed.



Let's see if the S.U.I.T. database has any useful info on him.



HOUDINO is a master escape artist. He began his career by performing daring feats of escape on stage. Breaking chains, getting out of handcuffs, escaping straitjackets, that sort of thing.



But what he couldn't escape were **low ticket sales**. So he turned to a life of crime—mostly bank robbing. He won't pass up a **steal**, and can't pass up a **deal**.



There is no vault that can stop him, and no cell that can hold him. Houdino likes to **break in**, **break out**, and **BREAKDANCE**.



Well, Mango, looks like to bust Houdino...



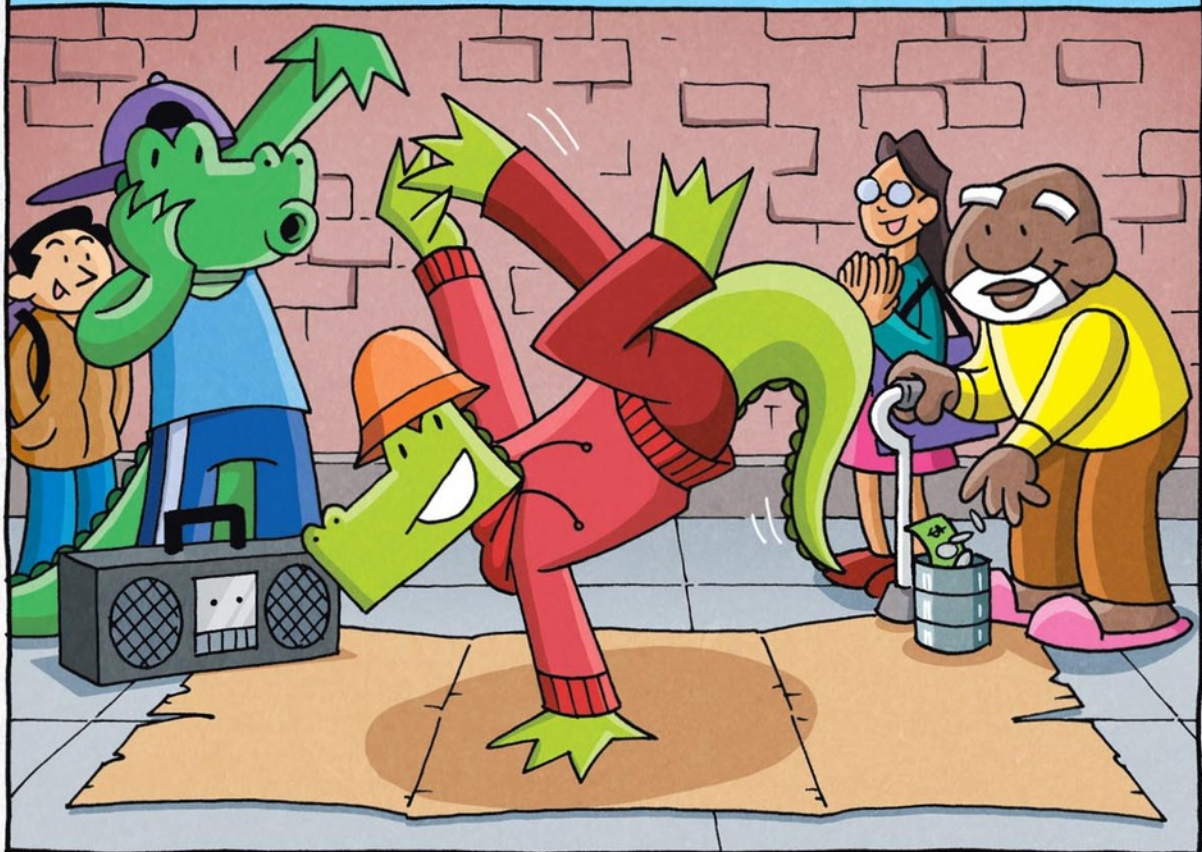
...we'll have to **BUST A MOVE**.



And so... ♪ You've got to push it to pop it! ♪



♪ ♪ ♪ Rock it to lock it! ♪ ♪ ♪







I was *sure* he wouldn't be able to resist a dance-off, but it looks like the only thing Houdino *can't* resist is money.

Even if it's small change!



The only things left in here are lint and mismatched buttons.



With that invention, robbing anyone is a piece of cake!

Hold up...

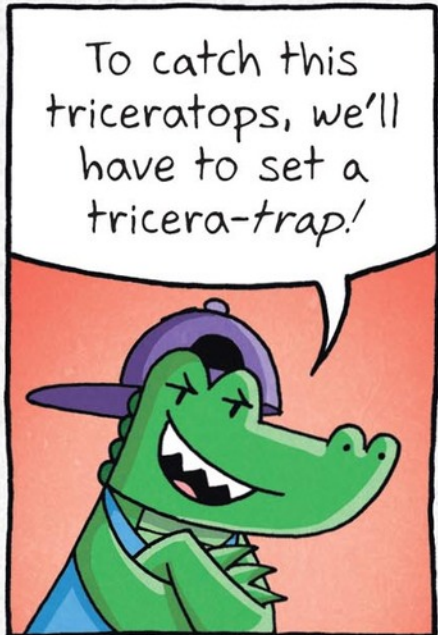


The Thingamasteve *ONLY* works on money. Which means Houdino can't use it to steal anything else.

Right...

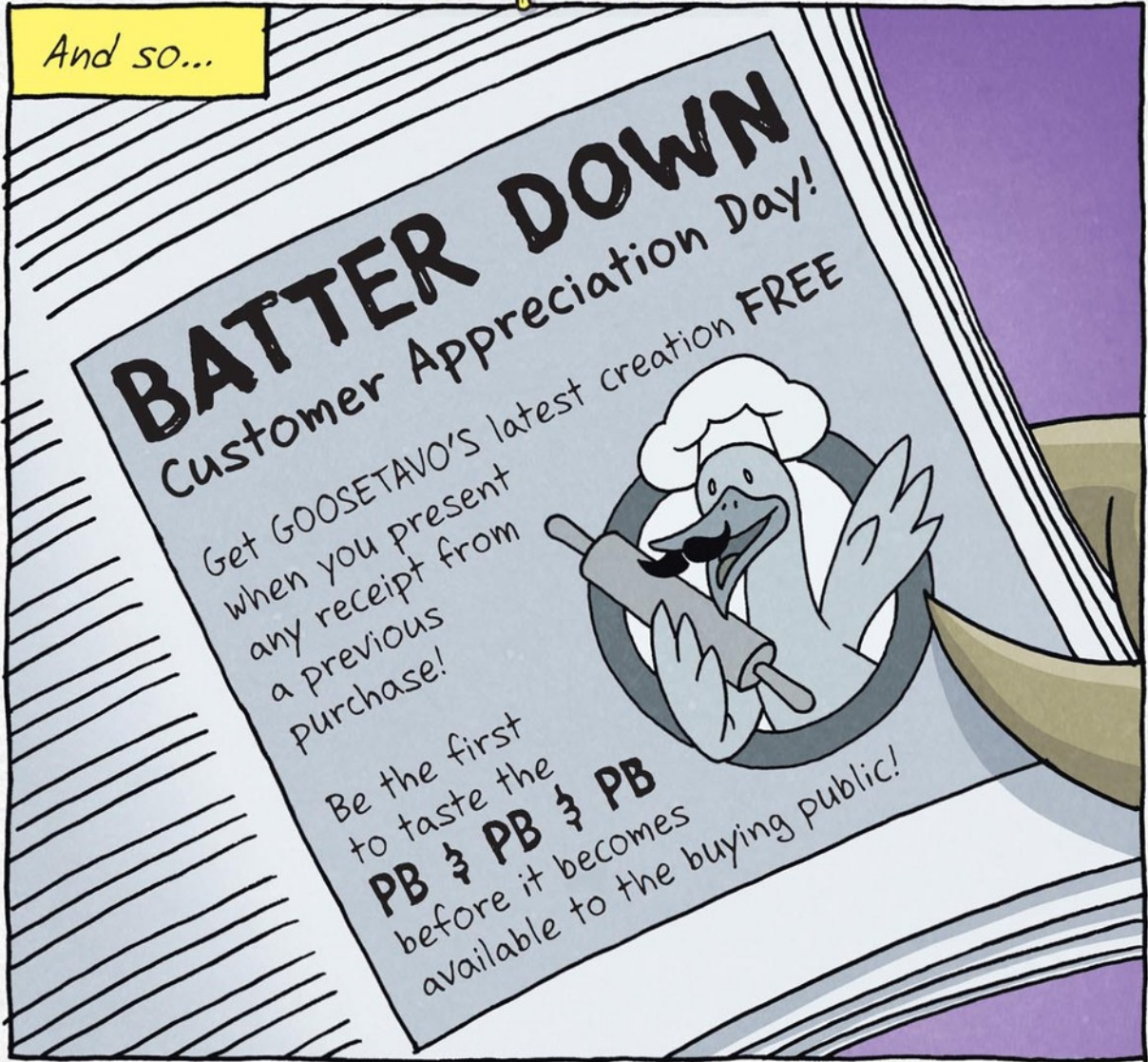
So what's the money *FOR*? He hasn't been caught spending it on anything.





Chapter 13

And so...

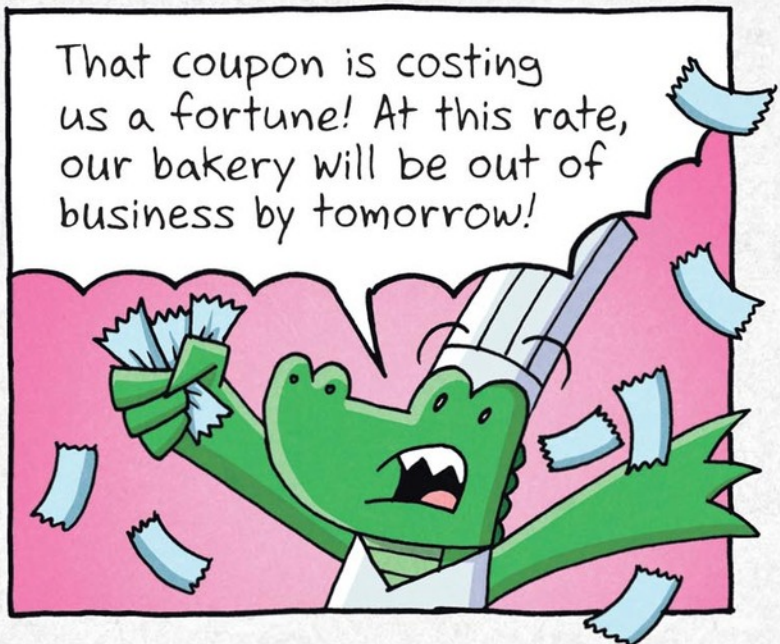
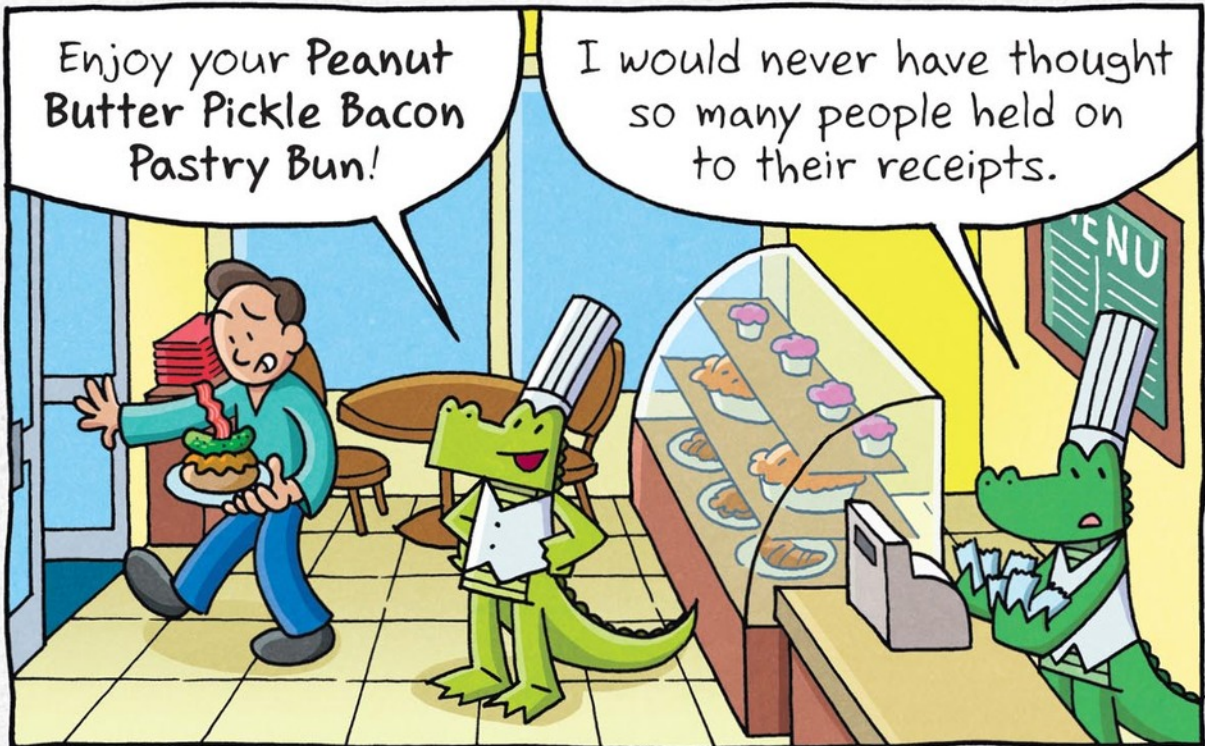


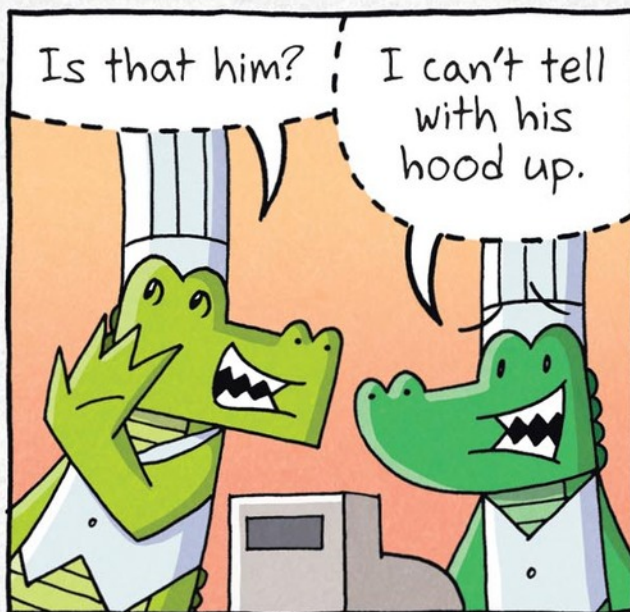
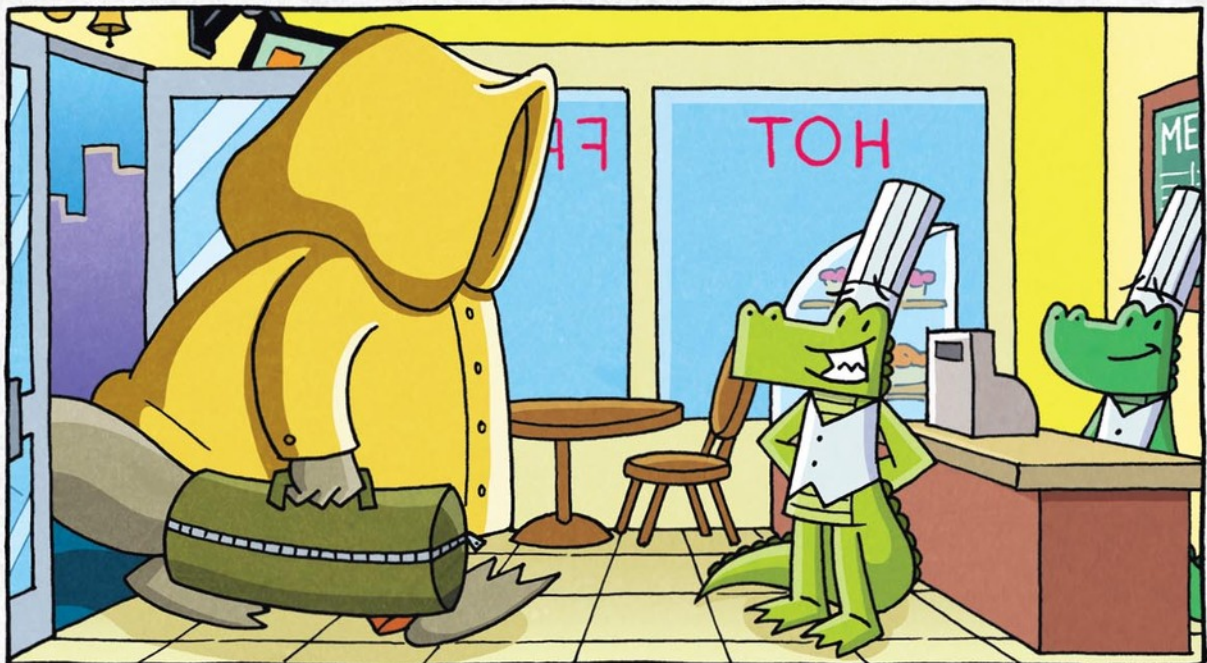
I may have more money now than I could ever spend...

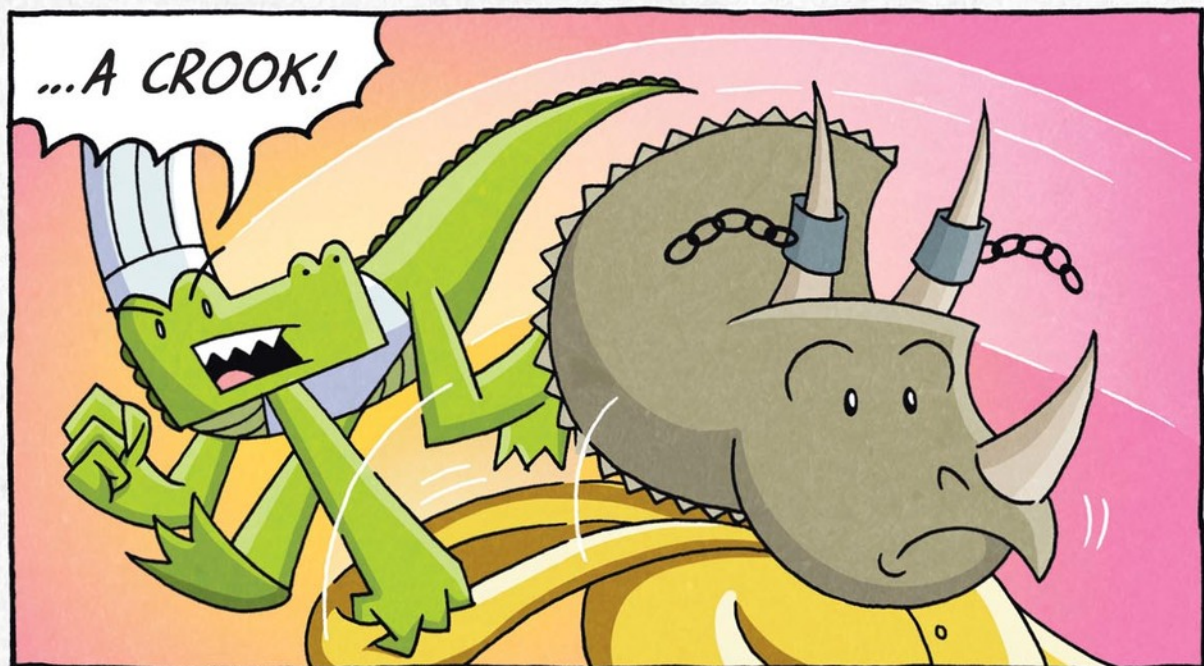
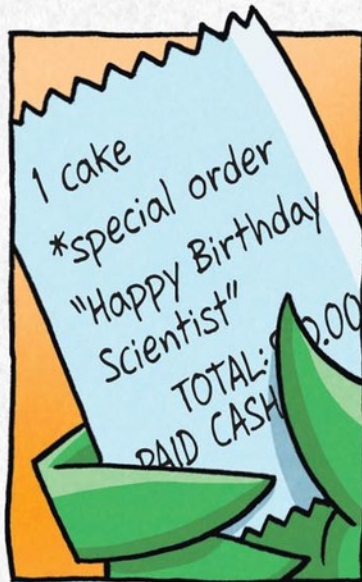


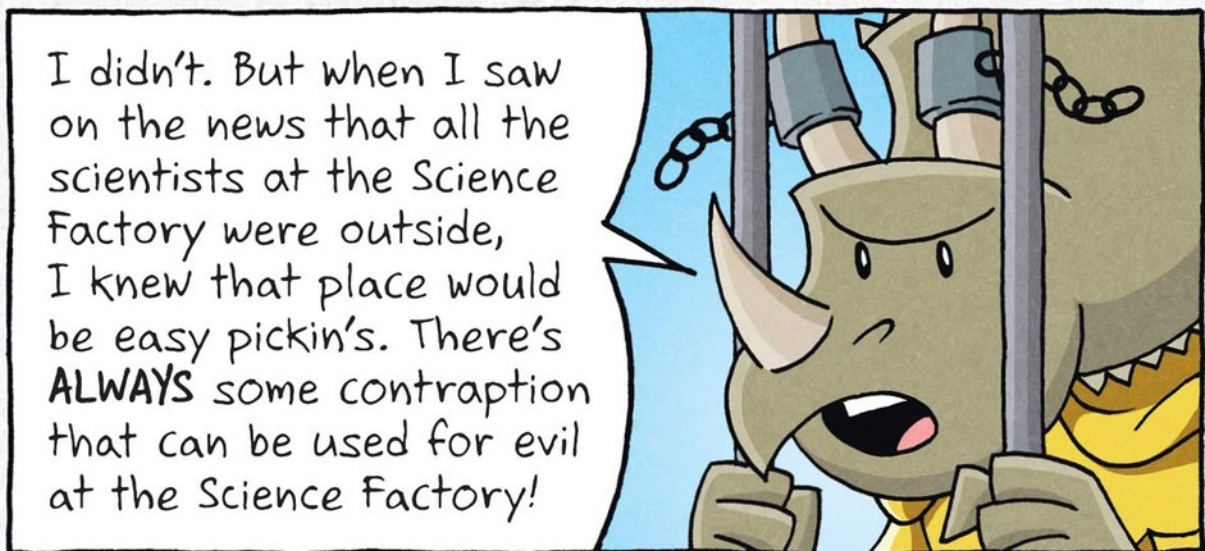
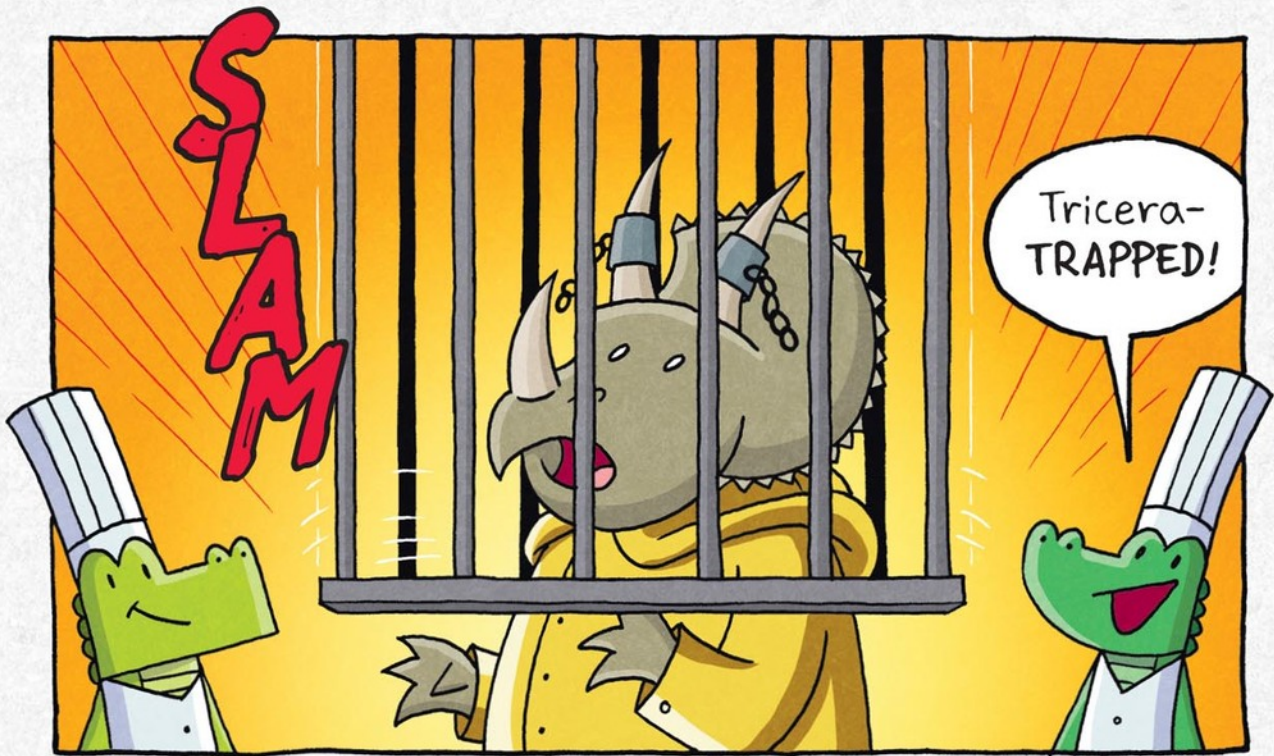
...but I'm not gonna pass up something that's FREE!











And handily enough, this one came with an instruction manual.

It's dishwasher safe!



And the ruse with the cake?



Everyone likes cake!
Easy way in.

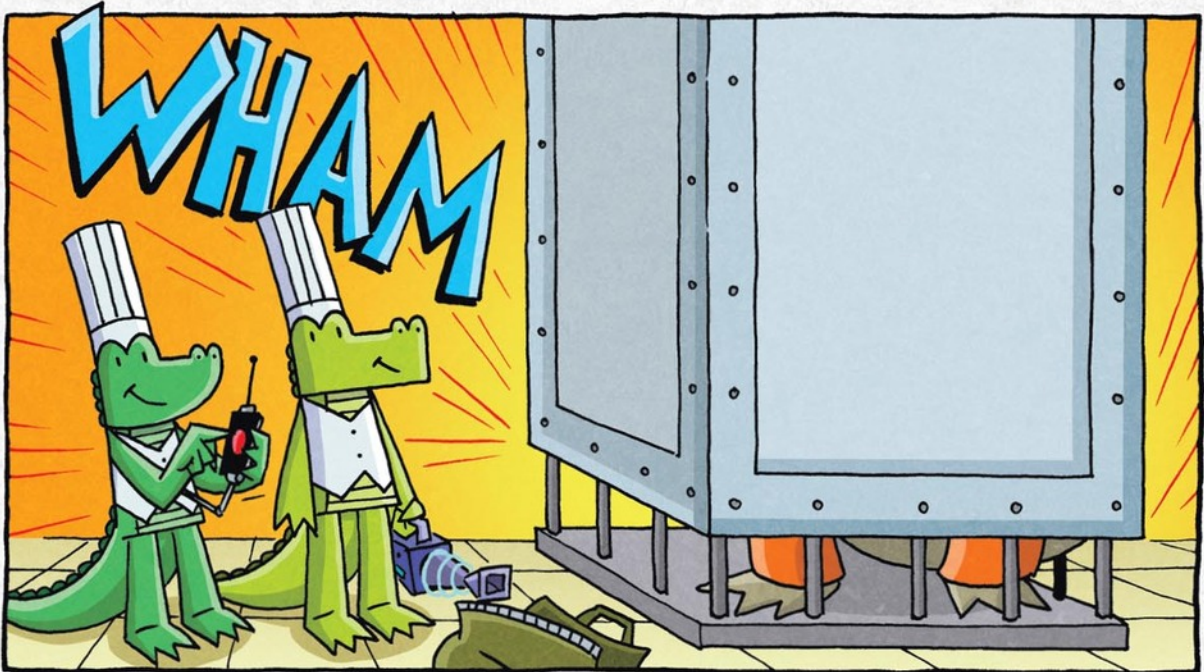


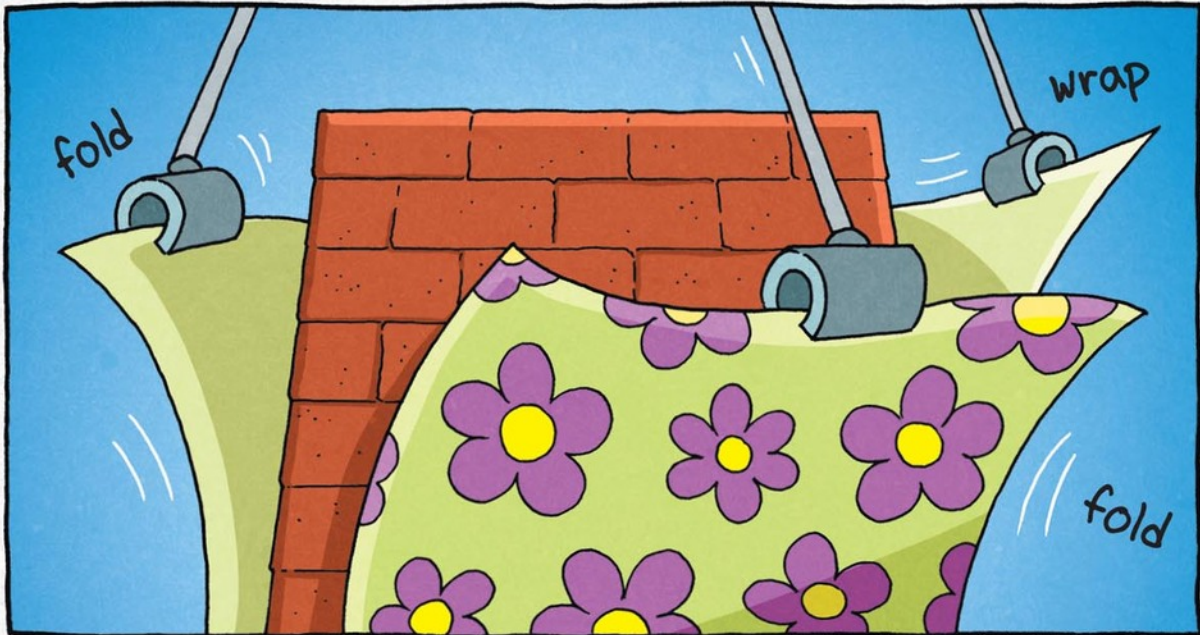
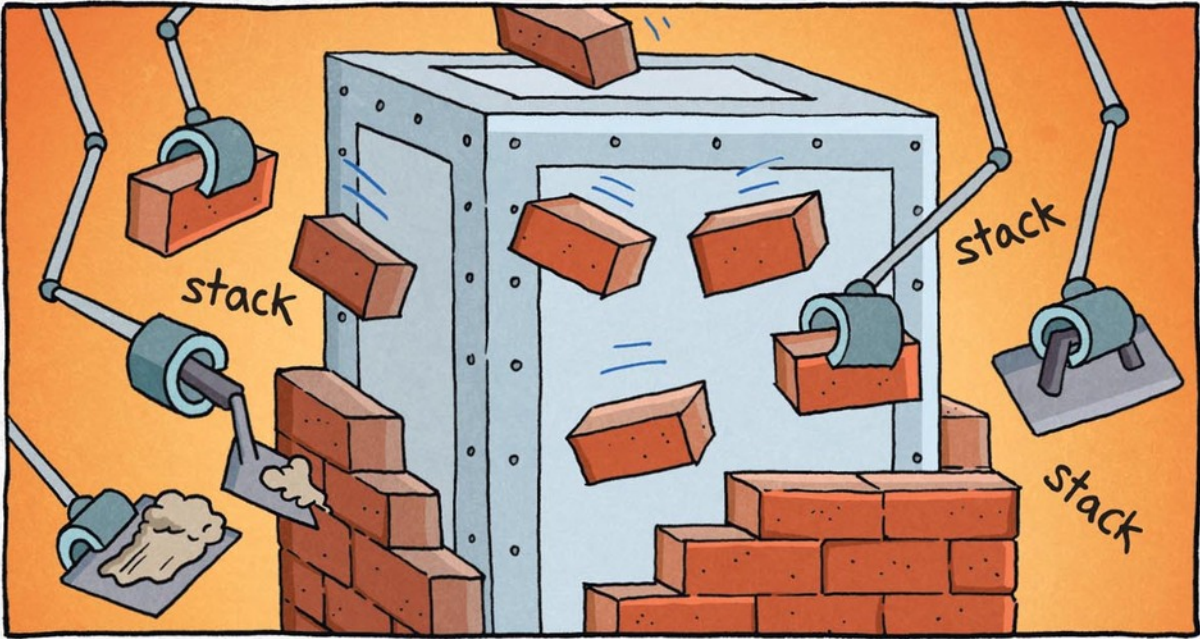
Though I do like to make an **EXPLOSIVE** exit.

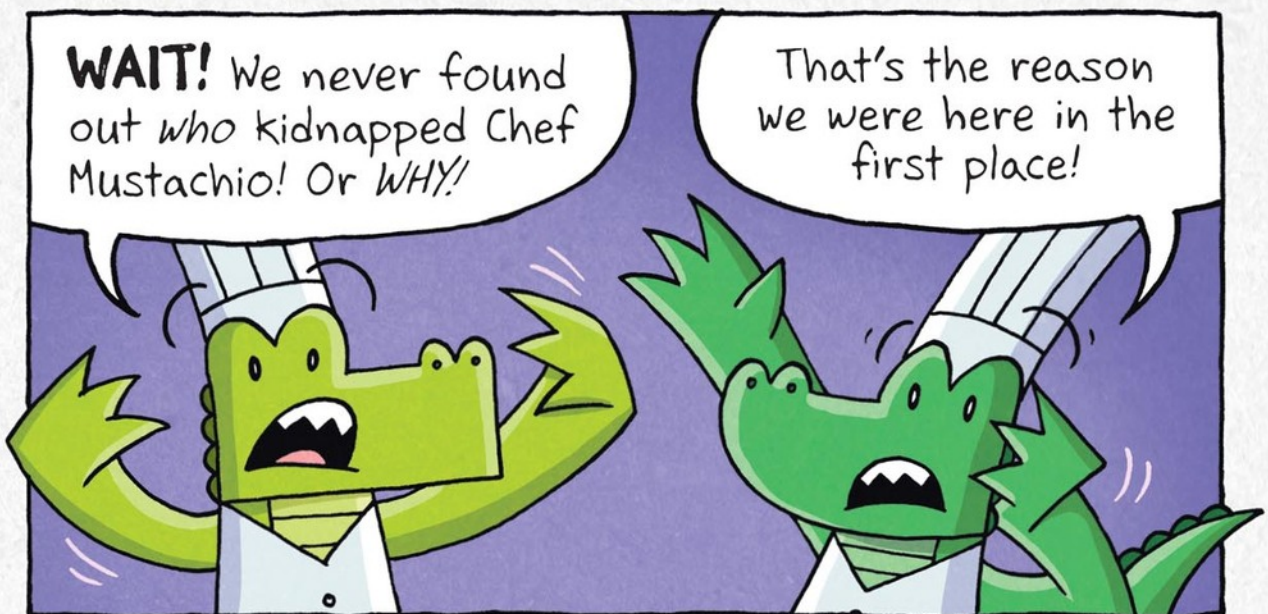
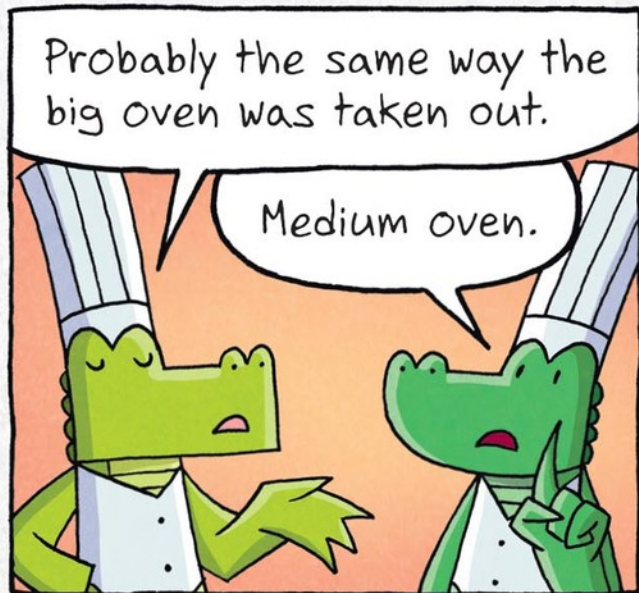


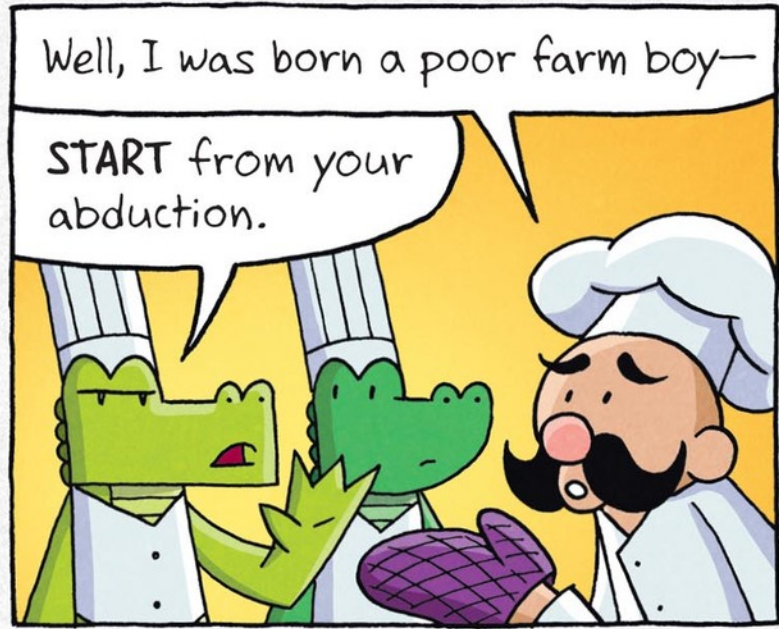
Well, your exiting days are over!



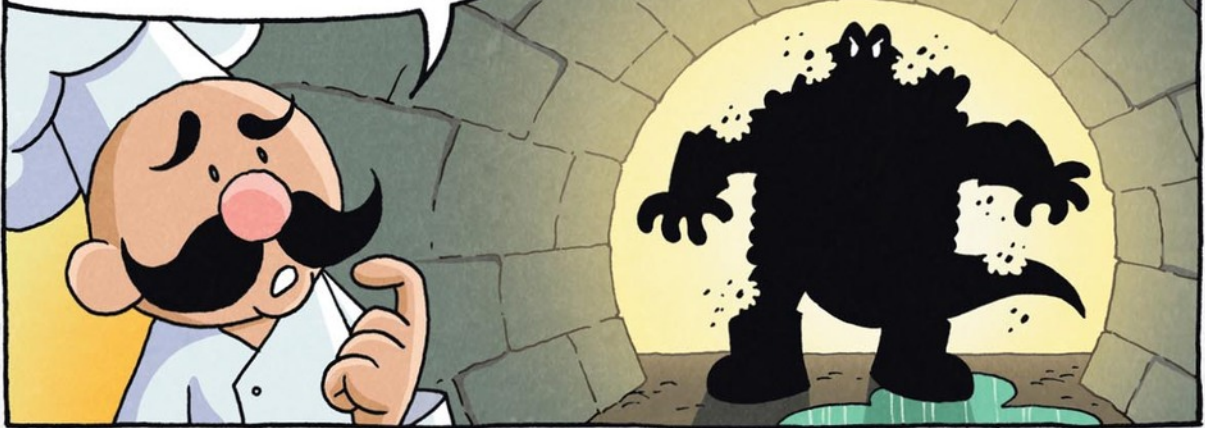








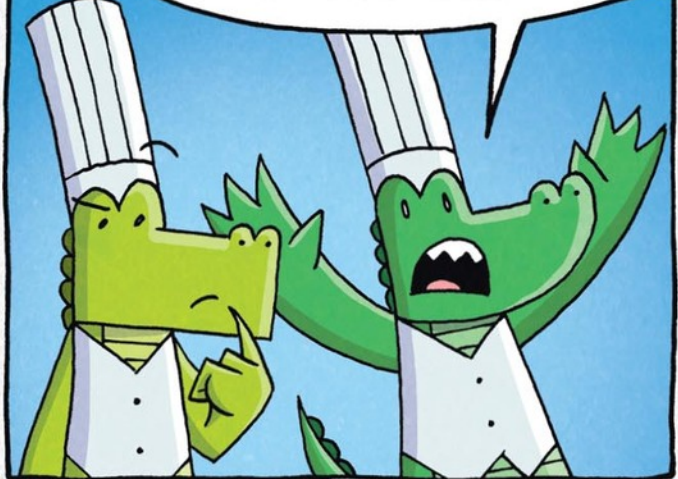
He was the most **UNSAVORY** character...though maybe he'd be all right with a sharp cheese and some prosciutto...



He was...crumbling... half-eaten...



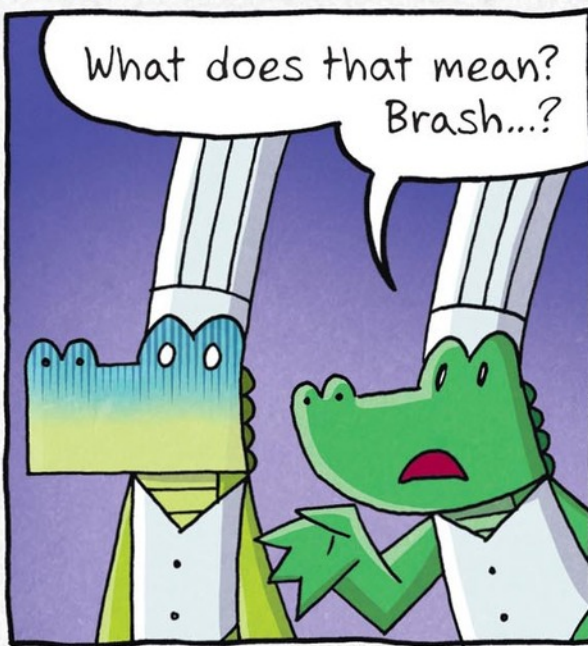
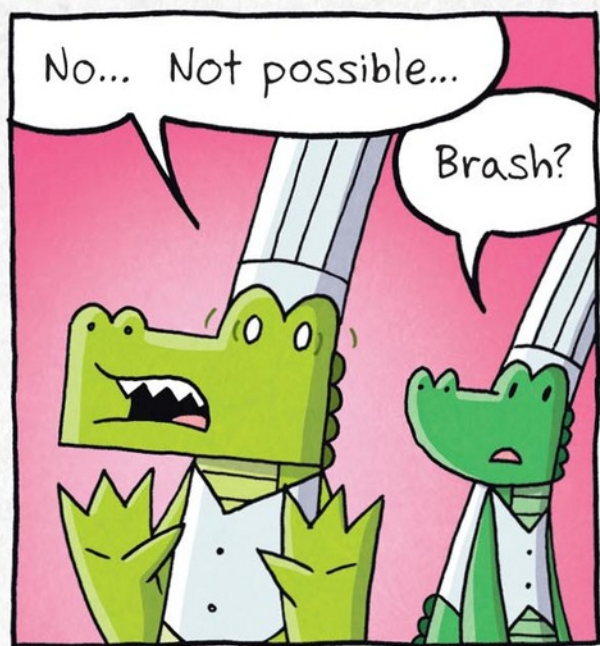
YOU'RE NOT MAKING ANY SENSE, MAN!

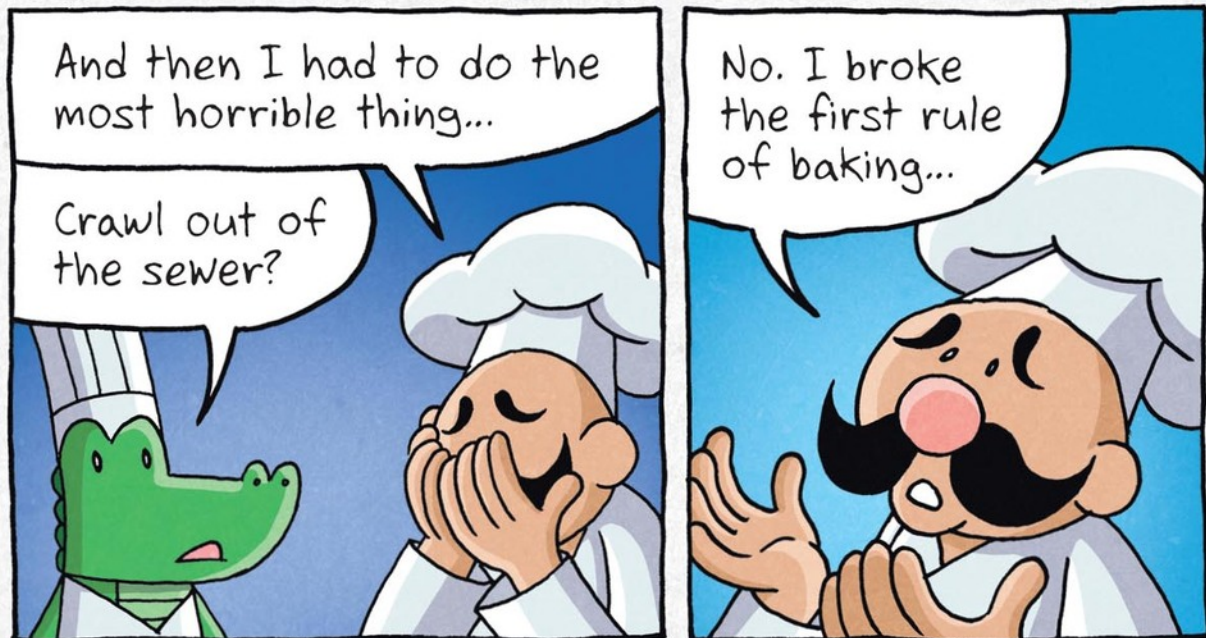


He forced me to develop a new type of dough. A *super* dough. A **hybrid** of cracker, cake, cookie, and bread.



A **HYBREAD**.







His name was Daryl. He was S.U.I.T.'s top agent!
I learned so much from him in our time together.



Our assignment was supposed to be easy as pie.

Daryl was going to retire. It was his last mission.



But no one expected it to be his *last* last mission.

We were cracking down on a cracker company that was disposing of **nuclear waste** by baking it into their saltines!



We cracked the case...



...but there was an incident with a cat.



Daryl fell into the radioactive dough...

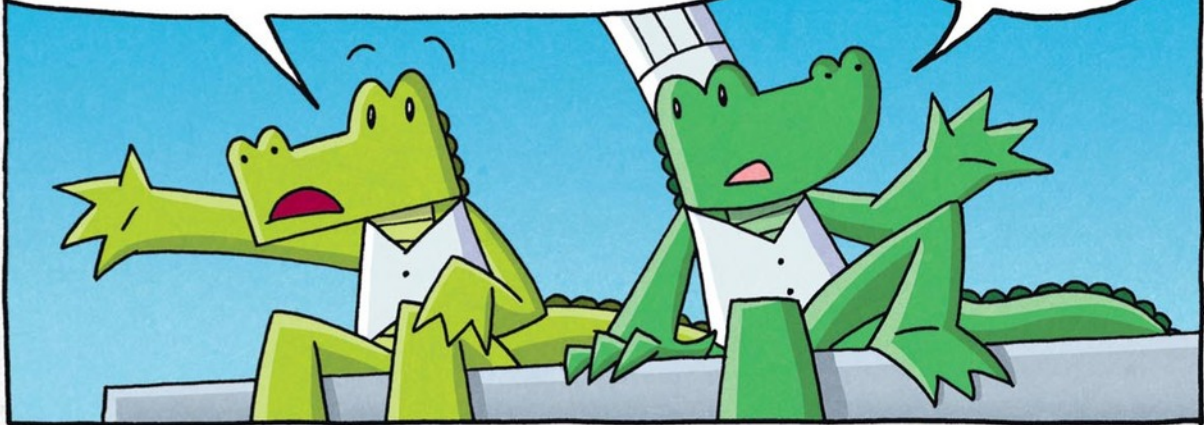


...and was never seen again.



Or so I thought. But he must have been alive this whole time! I could have saved him! It's all my fault! And now...he's an evil saltine out for revenge...

Yeah, I'd be salty about being left to die, too.



Sorry, Brash. I can only imagine how difficult this must be.

Thanks, Mango.



But you're a great detective. And Mustachio is safe now.

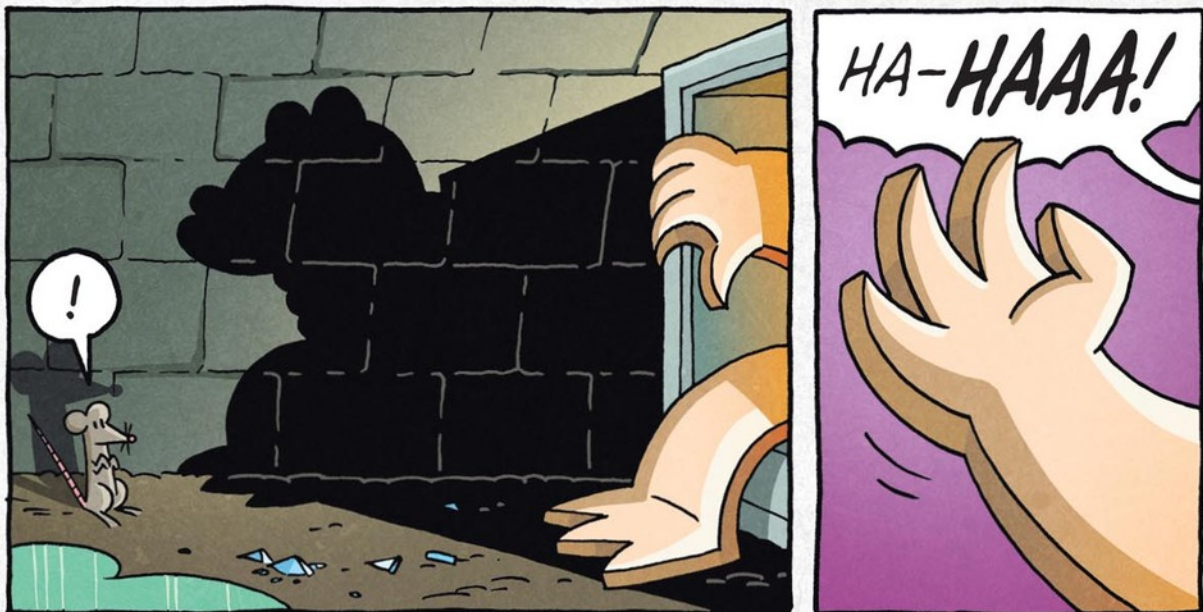
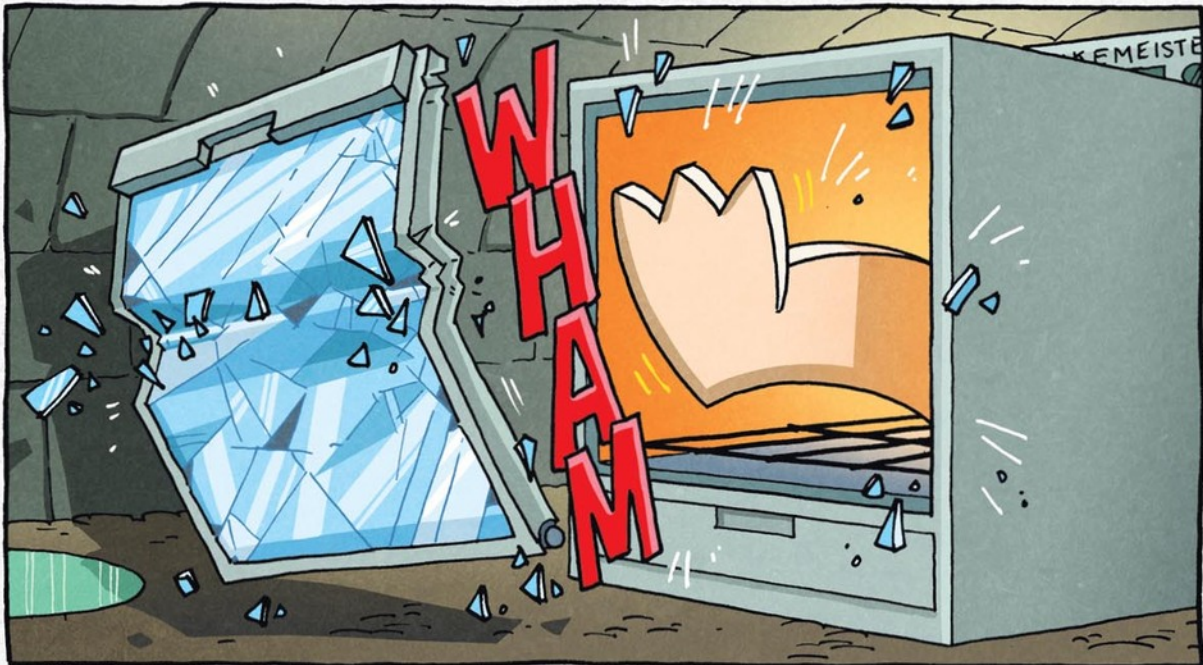
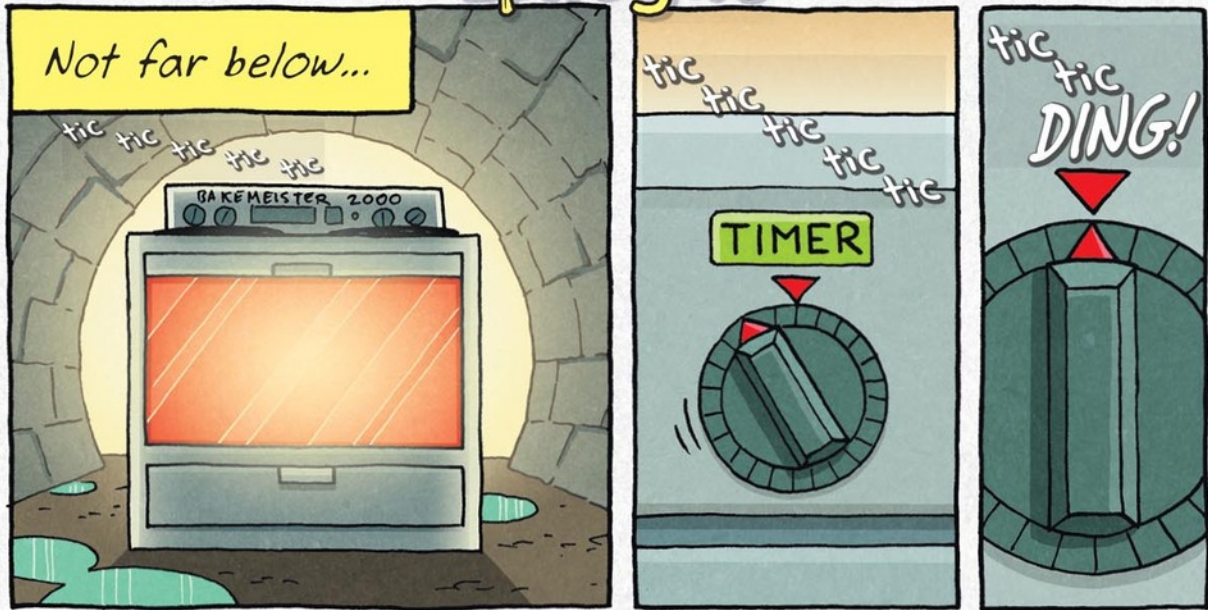


We can deal with Crackerdile later.

Something tells me his time will be up soon.



Epilogue



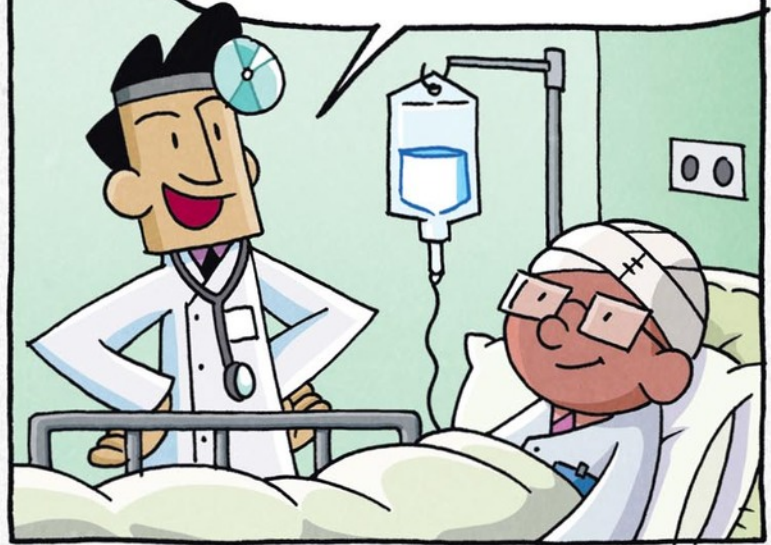




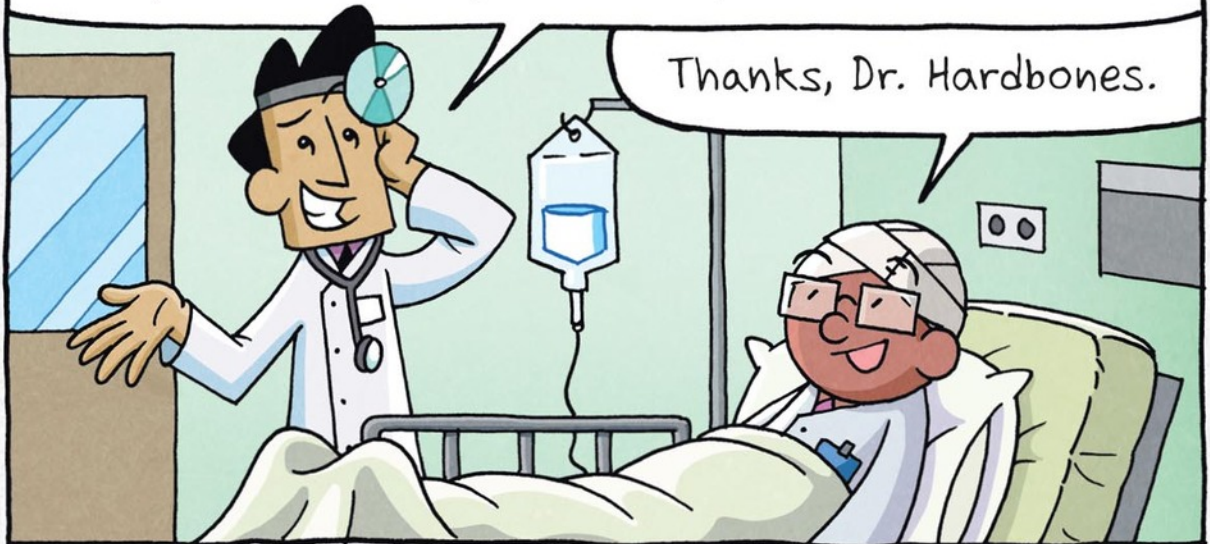
Ooooooooooh, boy!



That was **SOME** surgery!

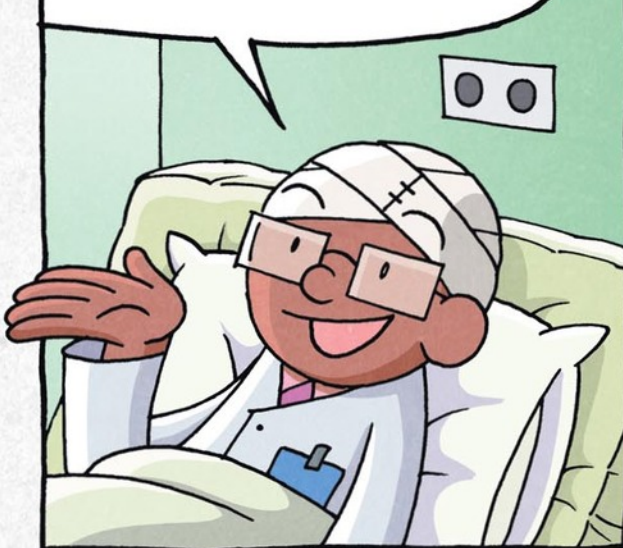


Not quite newsworthy, thankfully, but still a success.



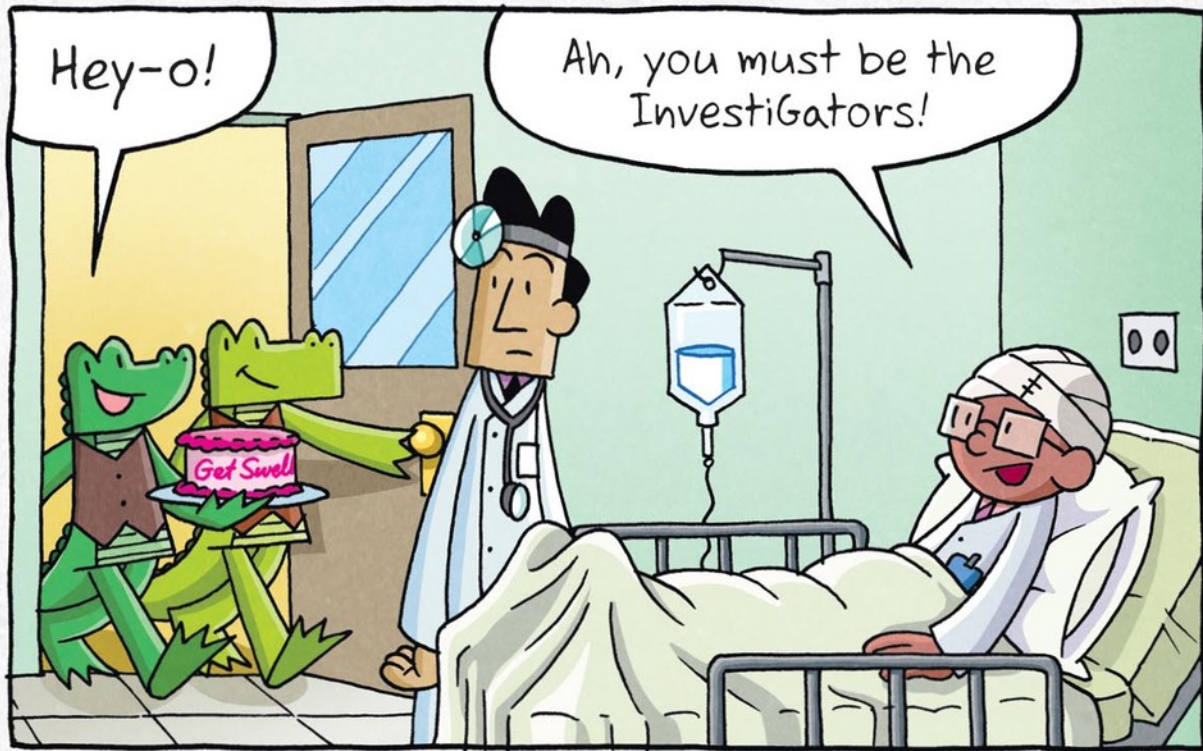
Thanks, Dr. Hardbones.

I feel *much* better!

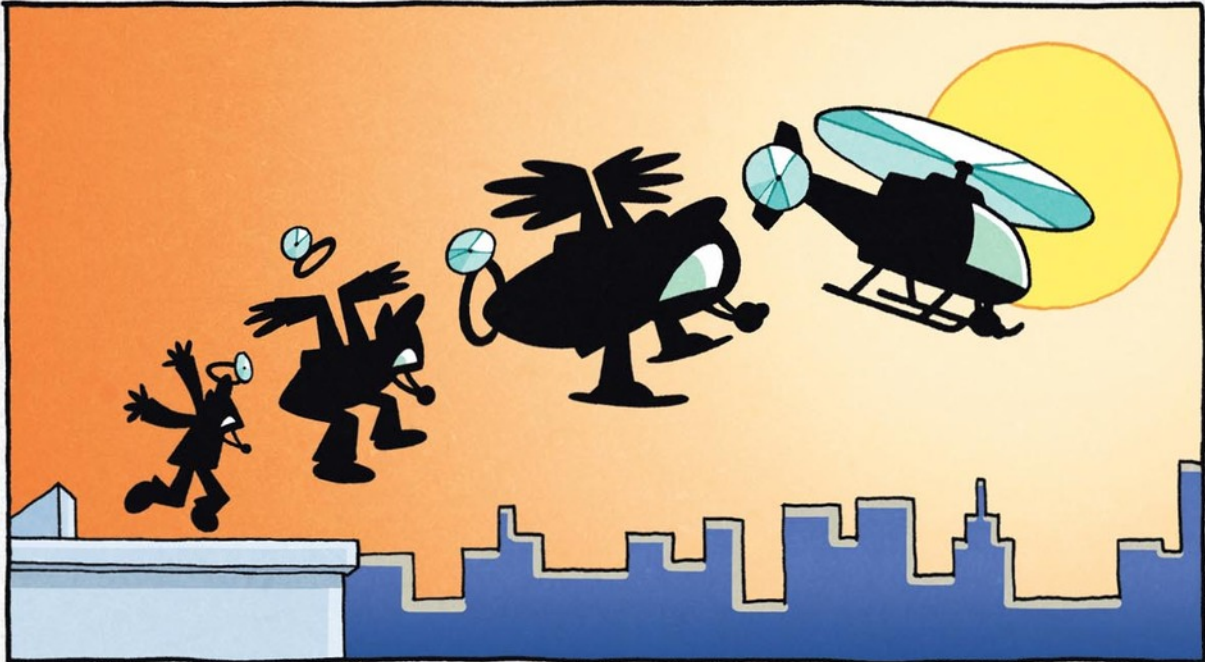


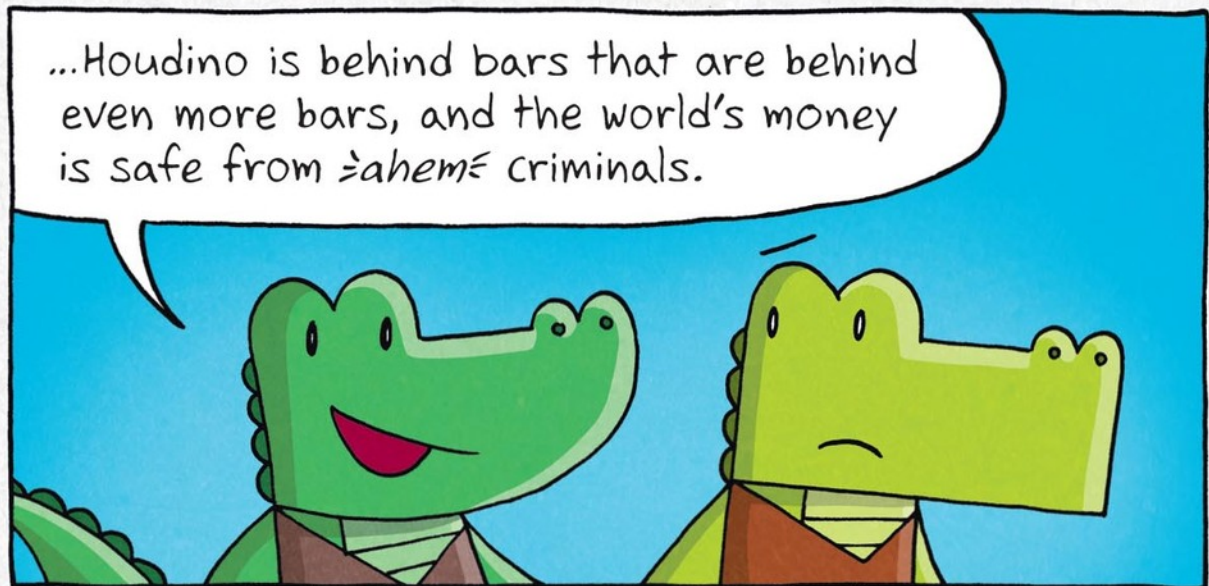
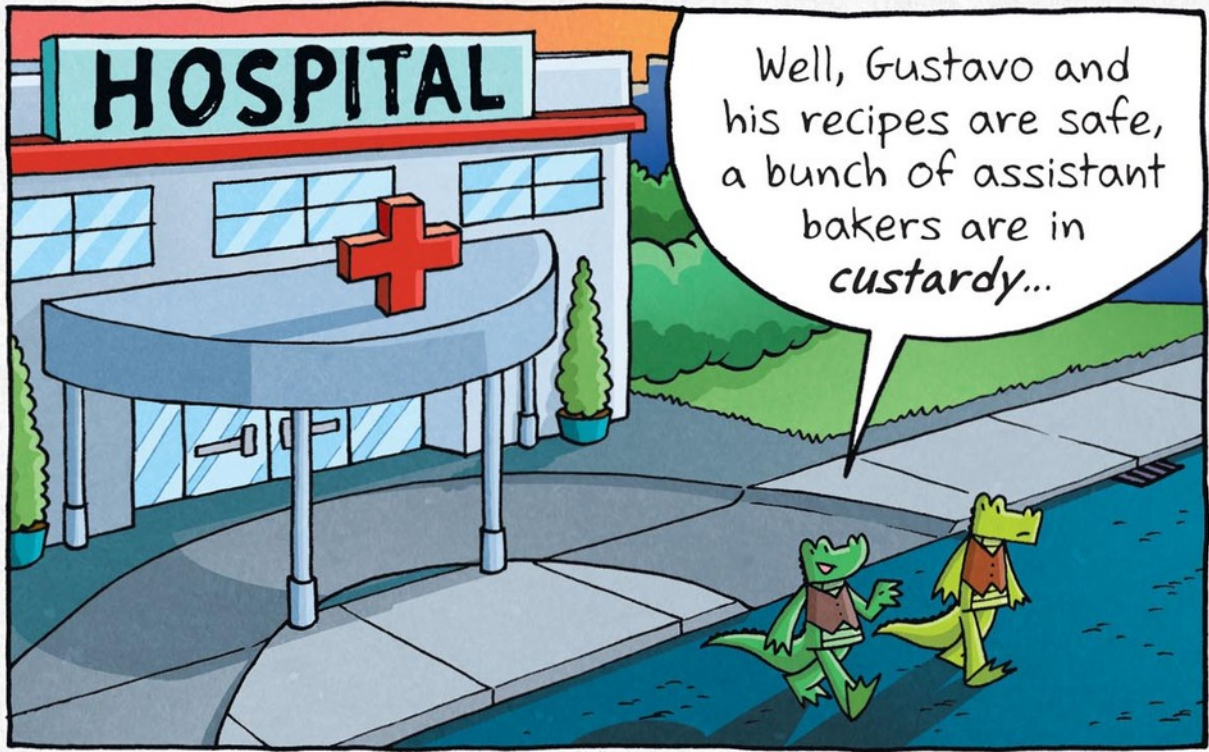
And even... **SMARTER!**











Even if Gustavo didn't use the super dough, as a former agent of S.U.I.T., Crackerdile is still a force to be reckoned with.



Listen—we're **MANGO** and **BRASH**. We're **INVESTIGATORS!**



When Crackerdile comes for us, we'll be **bready** for him!



We'll get that cracker in a jam!

He'll be toast!

We'll... We'll...

We'll bring that crust to justice?



HA!
Good one!

THE END...for now!

INVESTIGATORS

How to draw MANGO & BRASH

1. Draw two arches that sort of look like a bird with long, droopy wings.

2. Add a short line for the top of the snout.

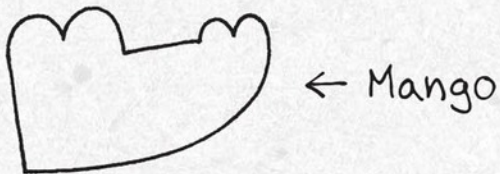
3. Draw two smaller arches for the nose.



4. Make a line at the back of the head, and for **Mango** draw a curved snout connecting his neck to his nose.

If you're drawing **Brash**, give him a rectangular snout.

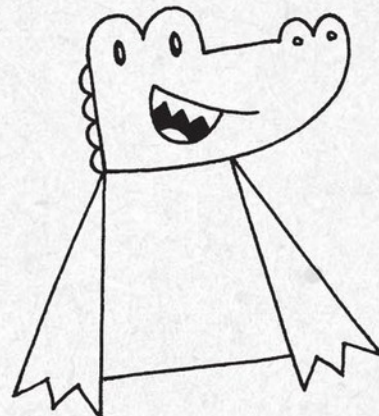
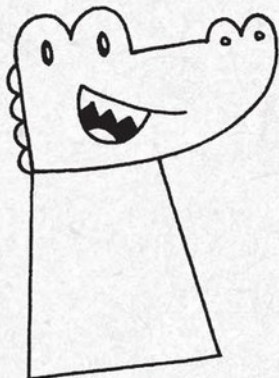
5. Add details like eyes, nostrils, and neck ridges. Give them expressions with their mouths and eyebrows!



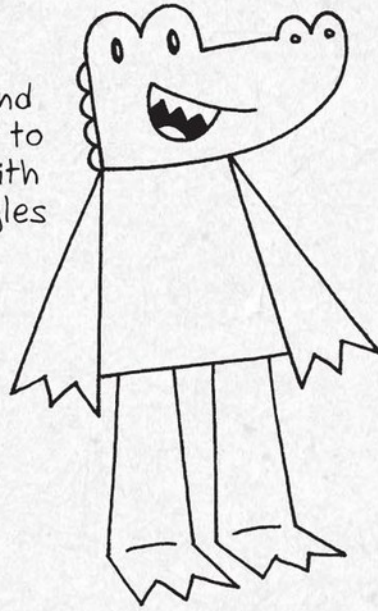
6. Mango and Brash have identical bodies. Let's draw Mango's, because Brash looks grumpy!

Draw a slightly crooked box shape for the torso.

7. Next, add arms, with little triangles at the ends for fingers. The Investigators usually have three, or four if we can see their thumbs.



8. Draw legs and feet, similar to the arms, with three triangles for toes.



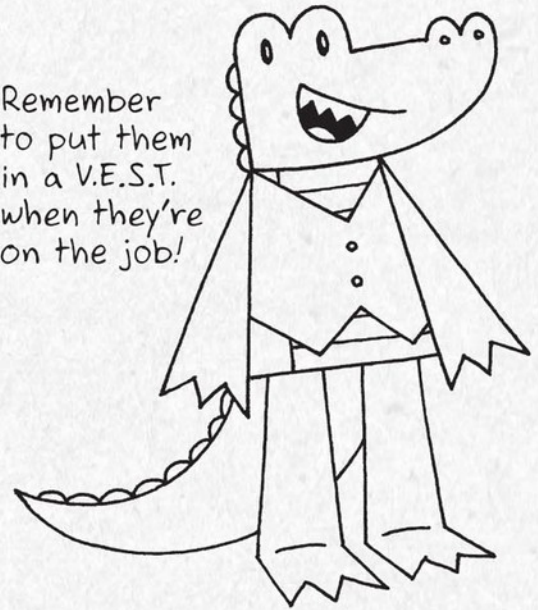
9. Add a tail.



10. Almost done! Your Gator will need belly stripes and tail ridges.



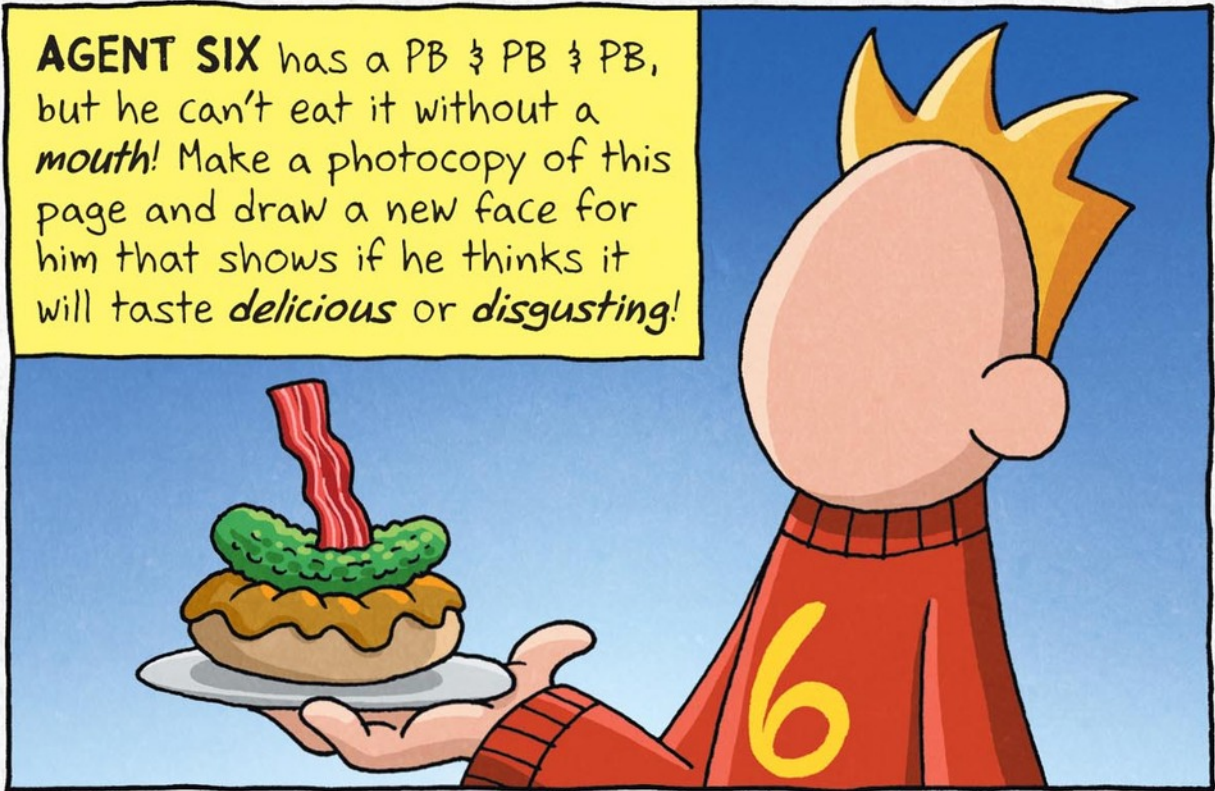
11. Remember to put them in a V.E.S.T. when they're on the job!



12. Last, give them some gadgets and color them in. Mango is dark green and Brash is light green. What kind of spy gear do YOU think they should have?



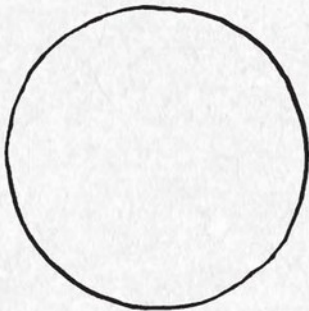
AGENT SIX has a PB & PB & PB, but he can't eat it without a *mouth*! Make a photocopy of this page and draw a new face for him that shows if he thinks it will taste *delicious* or *disgusting*!



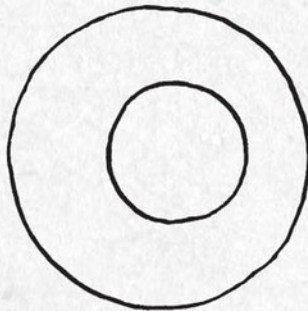
How to draw C-ORB*

*Computerized Ocular Remote Butler

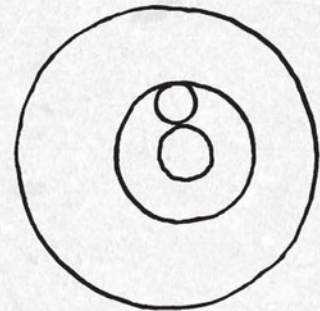
1. Draw a circle.



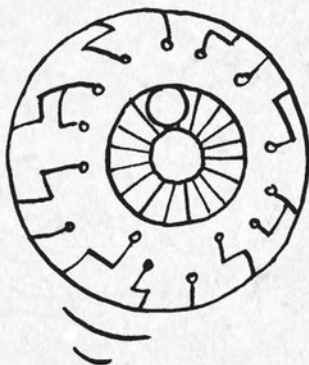
2. Draw another circle.



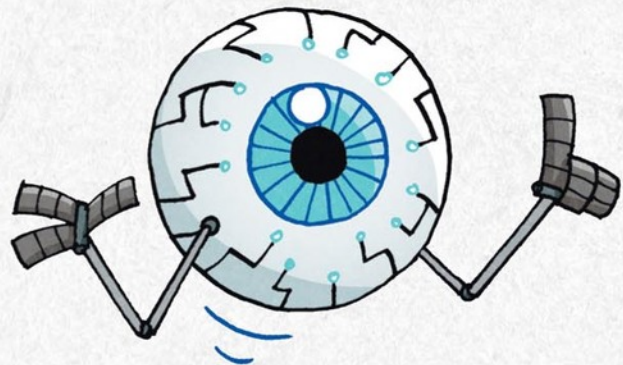
3. Draw two more circles!



4. Draw details like circuitry and iris lines. Add little swooshes to indicate C-ORB is floating.



5. Give C-ORB arms and color if you like. Use different colors to change C-ORB's mood!

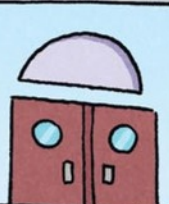


From the files of S.U.I.T.

S.U.I.T. HQ



Movie Theater



Library



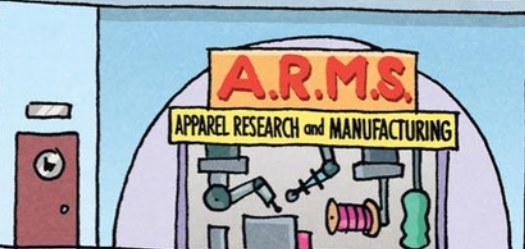
Computer Mainframe



Situation Room



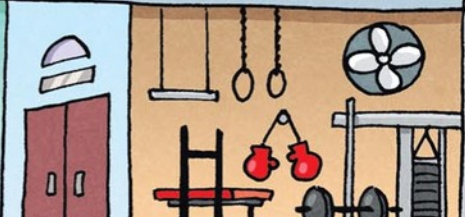
Food Court



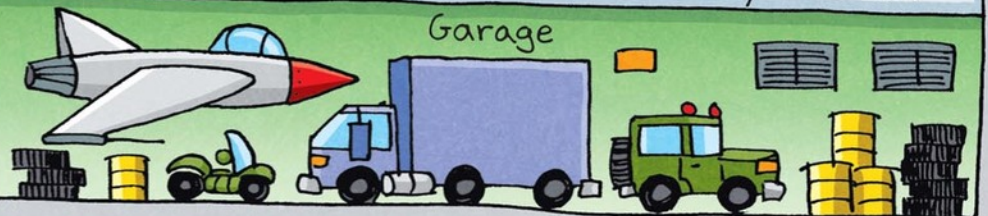
A.R.M.S. Division



Pool



Gymnasium



Garage

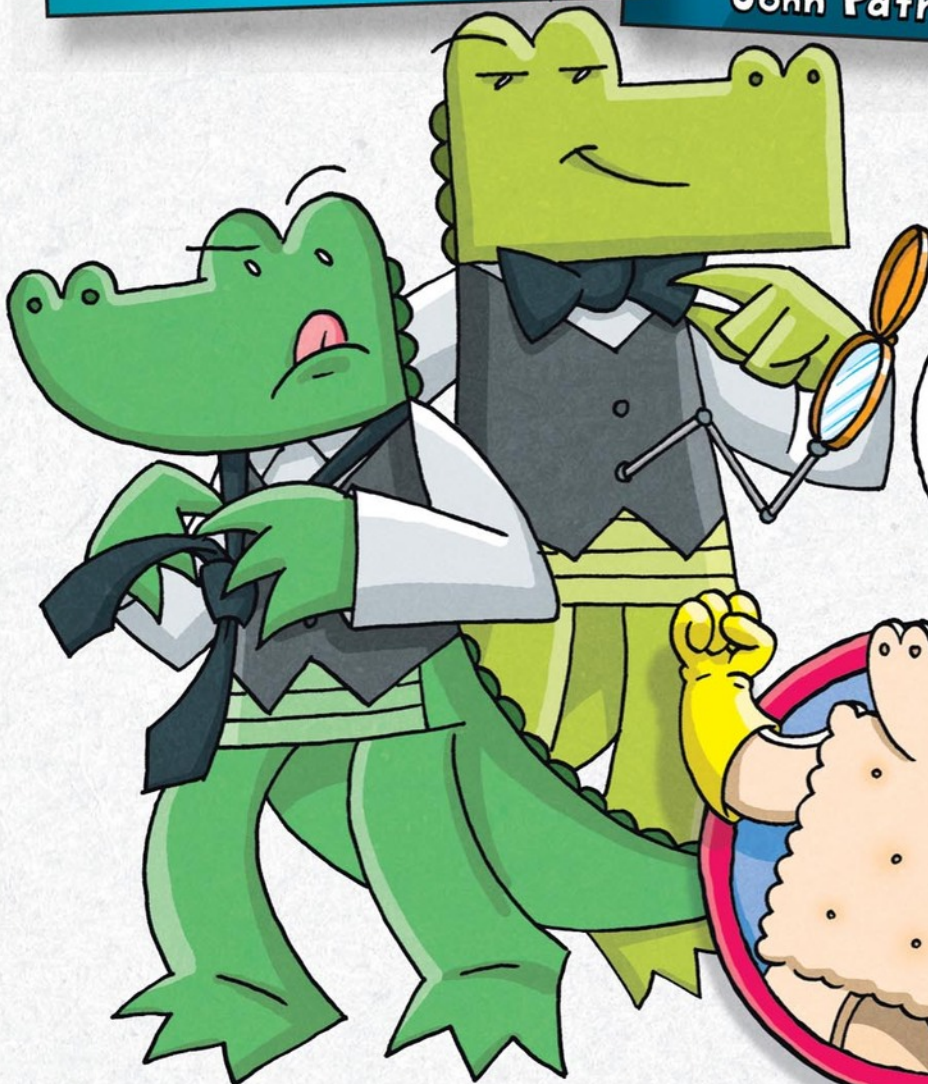
Classified

MANGO & BRASH *will return!*

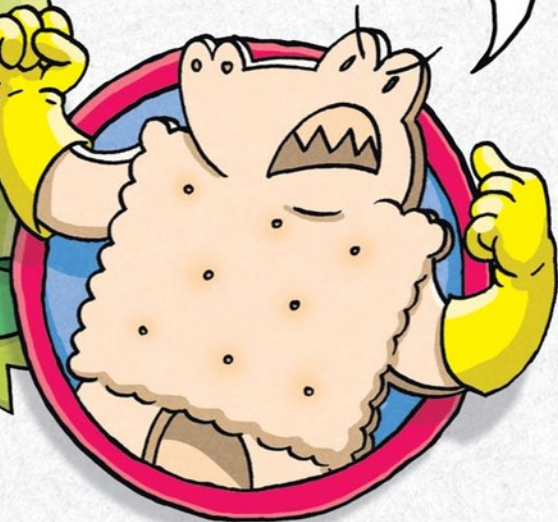
Investi
GATORS

Investi
GATORS

CLASSIFIED - TOP SECRET



As will I,
CRACKERDILE!
And I will have
my revenge!



More laughter and
adventure from

:01

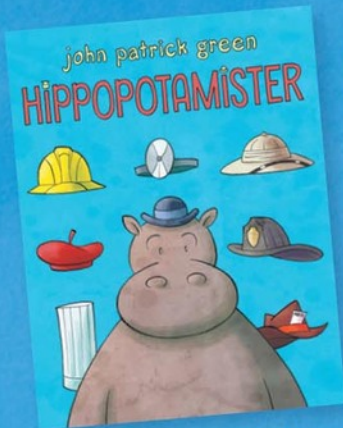
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firstsecondbooks.com



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Meet the House Kittens**
by John Patrick Green



**Kitten Construction Company:
A Bridge Too Fur**
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Hippopotamister
by John Patrick Green



Be Prepared
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Odd Duck
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Rafael Rosado



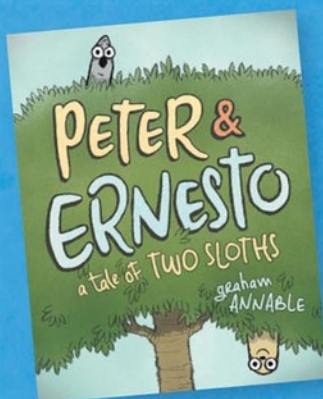
Dragons Beware!
by Jorge Aguirre and
Rafael Rosado



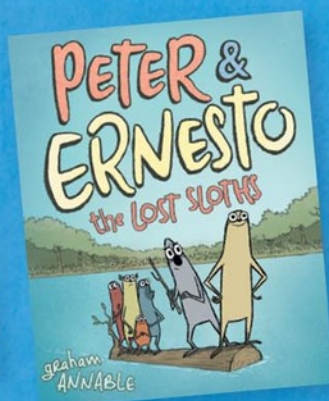
Monsters Beware!
by Jorge Aguirre and
Rafael Rosado



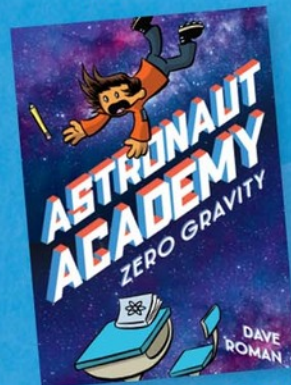
The Big Bad Fox
by Benjamin Renner



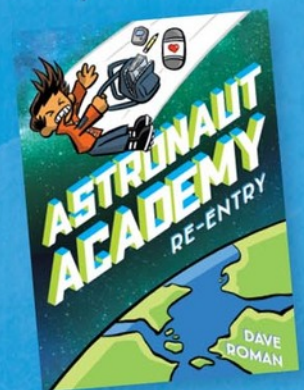
**Peter & Ernesto:
A Tale of Two Sloths**
by Graham Annable



**Peter & Ernesto:
The Lost Sloths**
by Graham Annable



**Astronaut Academy:
Zero Gravity**
by Dave Roman



**Astronaut Academy:
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These are the INVESTIGATORS:



sewer-loving agents of S.U.I.T.* and
scourge of supervillains everywhere!



With their Very Exciting Spy Technology
and toilet-based travel techniques, the
InvestiGators are undercover and on the case!

COMING SOON:



*Special Undercover Investigation Teams

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:01

First Second
New York